LIFE

OF

ROGER WILLIAMS,

THE

EARLIEST LEGISLATOR AND TRUE CHAMPION FOR A FULL AND ABSOLUTE LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

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"HUMANI JURIS ET NATURALIS POTESTATIS EST UNICUIQUE QUOD PUTAVERIT COLERE: NEC ALII OBEST AUT PRODEST ALTERIUS RELIGIO. SED NEC RELIGIONIS EST, COGERE RELIGIONEM, QUÆ SPONTE SUSCIPI DEBEAT, NON VI."—*Tertullian.*

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PREFACE.

In New England, the name of Roger Williams is now a household word. As one of the earliest advocates, and the first legislator of religious liberty, his fame has recently been more widely diffused. An admirable poem, by Judge Durfee, entitled "Roger Williams in Banishment," was reprinted in England in 1840, and in 1848 Williams's "Bloudy Tenent of Persecution Discussed" was published by the Hanserd Knollys Society, with a biographical introduction by the able editor, E. B. Underhill, Esq.

In describing the conduct of this extraordinary man, as well as that of his persecutors, truth has compelled the author sometimes to censure where he would gladly praise, but he has endeavored to maintain the strictest impartiality. The spirit of Williams was eminently catholic; and his name and memory are the property, not of a single denomination, but of the whole Christian world.

In preparing the present volume, the writer has spared no pains to obtain information from every source, whether contained in MSS. or printed works, and many facts relative to Williams's early life are now for the first time presented to the public. He is happy here to offer his acknowledgements to Lord H. Vane, and to several clergymen and literary gentlemen, for courteous replies to his inquiries, and for some valuable facts.

A memoir of Roger Williams was published in 1834, by Professor Knowles. It is a work of great research, and very useful for reference, but too much encumbered with documents, and too minute in its local details, to interest general readers. To this volume the writer is largely indebted.

In the numerous extracts given from the manuscripts of Williams, no alteration has been made, except to modernize the orthography, and to correct the punctuation when necessary to render his meaning more perspicuous.

No portrait of Williams is known to exist. One, indeed, has been published, purporting to be such, but is spurious, being, with slight alterations, the likeness of Benjamin Franklin, which appeared in an edition of his works printed in Philadelphia about half a century ago.

At a crisis when the public mind is so strongly excited on questions of civil and religious liberty, the great principle advocated by Roger Williams—that civil rulers have no authority to prescribe, enjoin, or regulate religious belief—demands the most serious consideration of every church and of every government.

April, 1852.

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LIFE OF ROGER WILLIAMS.

"Like Israel's host, to exile driven,
Across the flood the pilgrims fled;
Their hands bore up the ark of Heaven,
And Heaven their trusting footsteps led,
Till on these savage shores they trod,
And won the wilderness for God."

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL NOTICE OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS OF NEW ENGLAND—OPINIONS OF THE PURITANS ON ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS.

In the days that are past, when men, who were in advance of their age, discovered new truths in religion or philosophy, they were usually called to suffer or die in their defence. The seed fell on an ungrateful soil, was often watered with blood, and remained buried for ages, until at length a genial season caused it to spring up and bear abundant fruit.

Roger Williams was more favored. He suffered, indeed, for the noble principle he was the first to proclaim in the New World; but he afterwards bore it in triumph to the sanctuary he himself had provided, founded a state in accordance with it, embodied it in his own laws, and thus acquired immortal fame, as the earliest legislator and true champion for a full and absolute liberty of conscience.

To enable the reader intelligently to peruse the life of this eminent individual, it will be necessary to present a concise narrative of the first settlement of New England, and to consider the basis on which the colony of Massachusetts Bay erected the fabric of their society.

In September 1620, a company of English Protestants, exiles for religion, set sail for a new world; and, after a long and boisterous passage of sixty-three days, were safely moored in the harbor of Cape Cod. In the cabin of the *Mayflower*, before they landed, they formed themselves into a body politic, "to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws" as should be thought most convenient for the general good of the colony they had undertaken to plant, "for the glory of God and advancement of the christian faith, and honor of their king and country." This voluntary compact was signed by the whole body of men, forty-one in number, who, with their families, amounted to one hundred persons. The spot where the company fixed a permanent settlement, on the 11th of December, they named Plymouth, in remembrance of the hospitalities they received at the last English port whence they embarked.

These colonists had left England, on account of the oppression they endured, so early as 1608, and settled at Leyden, in Holland, where they attained "a comfortable condition, grew in the gifts and grace of the Spirit of God, and lived together in peace, and love, and holiness." The magistrates of the city said, "Never did we have any suit or accusation against any of them." But they felt as men in exile; and a foreign language, and the lax morals prevalent in that country, induced the pilgrims to change their abode, and seek an asylum in the New World. The farewell address delivered to them by their pastor, the Rev. John Robinson, breathes a freedom of opinion greatly in advance of his age: "I charge you, before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no further than you have seen me follow the Lord

Jesus Christ. The Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of his holy word. I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instruments of their reformation. Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God. I beseech you remember it—'tis an article of your church covenant, that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God."

The settlements composing the colony of Massachusetts Bay occurred a few years later. This magnificent enterprise was conducted under the direction of the Plymouth Company, who obtained a patent, by which a number of the nobility and gentry of England, their associates and successors, were constituted "the council established at Plymouth, in the county of Devon, for the planting ruling, ordering, and governing, of New England, in America." The council for New England, in 1628, sold to several gentlemen, among whom were John Humphrey and John Endicott, a belt of land stretching across the whole breadth of the continent, extending three miles south of the river Charles and the Massachusetts Bay, and three miles north of every part of the river Merrimac. In June, of the same year, a company of emigrants, under the direction of the enterprising and intrepid Endicott, sailed for Naumkeag, since called Salem, where they made a permanent settlement. The patent from the council at Plymouth gave a right to the soil, but no powers of government. A royal charter, which bears the signature of Charles I., passed the seals March 4th, 1629, a few days only before the king, in a public state-paper, avowed his design of governing without a parliament. By this charter, the associates were constituted a body politic and corporate, by the name of the Governor and Company of Massachusetts Bay, in New England. They were empowered to

elect, annually, forever, out of the freemen of said company, a governor, a deputy-governor, and eighteen assistants, and to make laws not repugnant to the laws of England; no provision requiring the assent of the king to render the acts of the body valid.

A powerful impulse was thus given to the friends of colonial enterprise; and, immediately, an emigration, unparalleled for its extent and the great respectability of the emigrants, was projected.

The Rev. Francis Higginson, an eminent nonconforming minister, of a truly catholic spirit, received an invitation to conduct another band of pilgrims to the shores of New England. He was a graduate of the university of Cambridge, and ranked among the most eloquent and pious in the realm. Higginson, earnestly desiring to propagate the gospel among the Indians, considered the invitation as a call from heaven. On leaving the scene of his labors for London, people of all ranks crowded the streets to bid him farewell. Three additional ministers joined the company. When about to lose sight of their native land—the home of their fathers, and the dwelling place of their friends—Higginson took his children and others to the stern of the ship, and said:—"*We* will not say, as the Separatists were wont to say, 'Farewell Babylon! —farewell Rome!' but *Farewell dear England!*—farewell the church of Christ in England! though we cannot but separate from the corruptions in it." He then concluded with a fervent and appropriate prayer for the king and the church in England, and for themselves and the expedition.

In June 1629, this pious band of two hundred individuals arrived at Salem, where they hoped to kindle the light of the gospel amid the darkness of heathenism, and to plant a church free from the corruptions of human superstition.

Many persons of large fortune, and superior education, resolved to remove with their families to Massachusetts, provided the power, conferred by the charter of the colony, and

the seat of government, should be transferred to America. This important measure was fully acceded to, and on the 28th of April, 1630, John Winthrop, who had been chosen governor—a man whose mental endowments derived lustre from the noblest moral qualities—sailed with his associates in the *Arabella* from Yarmouth. The whole number of vessels employed during the season was seventeen, and they carried over more than fifteen hundred passengers. In June and July, the fleet which bore Winthrop and his companions arrived at Salem. The first care of the colonists was to select the most suitable places for the new plantations, and it was not long before they were settled in Boston and the adjacent villages.

Before leaving the land of their nativity, they published to the world the reasons for their removal, and bade an affectionate farewell to the church of England. "Our hearts," say they, "shall be fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness." Their fervent piety, their unwavering faith in Divine Providence, and their desire to form a pure church, enabled them to encounter every hardship with undaunted courage. Many of this band of emigrants were men of large hereditary wealth, and hgh endowments; scholars of varied and profound learning; civilians, who had attained official rank, power, and fame; and divines, who had won the highest respect in their native land, and who were among the holiest and most gifted men of the age. Nor must we forget that there were many distinguished ladies who accompanied their husbands—Christian women, accustomed to the indulgences and refinements of life, and whose sincere religious faith gave them fortitude to endure the severest sufferings, and rendered them patient in their deepest sorrows,

> "What sought they thus afar?
> Bright jewels of the mine?
> The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
> They sought a faith's pure shrine!"

In order clearly to understand the causes of the opposition which Roger Williams encountered, in a colony planted by such men, we must briefly advert to the opinions they held on ecclesiastical affairs.

From the days of Elizabeth to the period we are now considering, there had existed in England a perpetual conflict between the prelatical party and the puritans;—the former determined to enforce strict uniformity; and the latter, strongly opposed to the popish ceremonies still retained in the church. The puritans, as a body, at first desired reform, and not schism; but when they were driven out from the communion of the church by cruel persecution, they united in forming societies more in accordance with their views of the New Testament model. Some approved of the presbyterian form of government, others of the independent, and a few preferred a modified episcopacy. Enlightened as these confessors were on the great doctrines, and on many of the minor points of church government, they still remained in ignorance of one very important principle—the nature of true religious liberty. Great as their sufferings had been, from the persecutions of the established church, they had failed to discover the malignant source of this evil. They did not perceive, that whenever the state usurped power to legislate for conscience, a principle was set up which must inevitably lead to persecution and injustice—that to place the sovereign in the room of the pope was another form of antichrist, whose claims, if not so arrogant, were more inconsistent, than that of a pretended infallible head. They did not perceive that this assumed power of the state to govern the church was the great barrier to the carrying out of the reformation, and to the further scriptural changes they so fervently desired. If they had been so far tolerated that they could have remained in their own land, they would, like the English nonconformists, have found out, in the progress of time, their mistake; but when they became legislators themselves, in the colonies they so nobly founded, their error was

a fruitful source of strife and division. Misled by analogies with the Mosaic institutions, they confounded the state with the Church, the citizen with the christian, and assumed themselves, though fallible men, the power exercised under the Jewish theocracy, by a Divine King and Infallible Legislator.

The principles of the puritans, who sought the shores of New England to establish religious liberty for themselves and their posterity, have been greatly misunderstood. What they meant by religious freedom was not an unlimited freedom of conscience. Universal toleration they regarded as a crime, and considered it a solemn duty to God to oppose error and suppress false doctrines, if necessary even by force. While we lament and condemn their conduct, a candid mind will remember that the true grounds of liberty of conscience were not then embraced by any sect of christians. All parties appeared to think themselves the sole depositories of truth, and that every opposing doctrine must be suppressed.

At this period, it was not the church of England alone that was intolerant; even later, the Scotch commissioners in London remonstrated, in the name of their national church, against a "sinful and ungodly toleration in matters of religion;" whilst the whole body of the English presbyterian clergy, in their official papers, protested against the schemes of Cromwell's party, and solemnly declared, "that they detested and abhorred toleration." The excellent Richard Baxter, a man noted in his day for moderation, said, "I abhor unlimited liberty or toleration for all." Edwards, another celebrated divine, observed, "Toleration will make the kingdom a chaos, a Babel, another Amsterdam, a Sodom, an Egypt, a Babylon."

The first settlers of New England were not, therefore, singular in believing themselves bound in conscience to extirpate every noxious weed from the garden of the Lord, and "to use the sword of the civil magistrate to open the understandings of heretics, or cut them off from the state, that they

might not infect the church or injure the public peace."* While, however, in forming a judgment of the pilgrim fathers, we fully admit these extenuating circumstances, our admiration must be increased for the founder of Rhode Island, as the first legislator whose enlarged understanding and expansive charity led him to recognise the doctrine of entire religious freedom; and to renounce the almost universal error of his age.

* Callender, in R. I. Hist. Coll. iv. p. 71.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY LIFE OF WILLIAMS—HIS EDUCATION AT SALTER'S HALL—STUDIES AT OXFORD—IS ADMITTED TO ORDERS—BECOMES A DECIDED NONCONFORMIST.

The seventeenth century has been justly called, by Dr. Chalmers, "the Augustan age of Christianity." It was the age of Howe, Baxter, Owen, Goodwin, and other eminent divines, who, by their preaching and writings, effected a second reformation in the christian church.

At the commencement of this eventful period, when the intellect had received a powerful impulse, manifested in every form of inquiry, Roger Williams was born, in an obscure country parish, amid the mountains of Wales. It is deeply to be regretted that so few memorials exist of his early history. Until now, even the christian name of his father, the place of his birth and education, and other incidents of his youthful days, were unknown, or rested merely on tradition. The present writer, for many years past, has spared no pains in inquiries respecting that period of his life, and he has been successful in obtaining several facts, which are now for the first time published.

Roger Williams, the founder of the state of Rhode Island, was the son of William Williams, of Conwyl Cayo, a parish situated near Lampeter, in the county of Carmarthen, South Wales. Here his ancestors had resided on their own small estate for many generations, at a place called *Maestroiddyn fawr*, in the hamlet of Maestroiddyn. In addition to other documentary evidence now in the possession of the author,

the following record is copied from the archives of the university of Oxford:—"Rodericus Williams filius Guliehni Williams, de Conwelgaio, Pleb. an. nat. 18, entered at Jesus college, April 30, 1624." It appears from this record tha Williams was born in the year 1606. Scarcely any of the parochial registers of Wales are found to go farther back than the times of the Commonwealth, and the earliest date of those of his native parish is 1694. Other facts, however, confirm the record preserved in the archives at Oxford. There is now living at Conwyl Cayo—or as it is more frequently called simply Cayo—a venerable patriarch, nearly one hundred years old, who is apparently of the same family with Roger Williams. The mental powers of this aged Nestor are still vigorous, and his memory tenacious with respect to circumstances which have long since transpired. He says he has heard his grandfather mention "that the great Roger Williams, who was educated at Oxford, was one of his family, and that he went *over the sea*, after being a clergyman for a few years in England." He asserts that his grandfather lived to the age of ninety-eight; and that his great grandfather reached nearly the same advanced period. He says, also, that at one time, there were two letters in the possession of his family which had been received by his great grandfather from Roger Williams.

No allusion to his parents is found in the writings of Williams, but he has left us one fact respecting his early years, which is of all others the most important. Near the close of his life he says, "from my childhood, now about threescore years, the Father of lights and mercies touched my soul with a love to himself, to his only-begotten, the true Lord Jesus, and to his holy scriptures." This remark justifies the belief that his parents were pious, that he was educated with care, and that religious principles had, at a very early period, a decided influence upon his mind.

At what age, or for what object, he was removed from the

rural seclusion of his native hamlet to the busy scenes of London we have no record, but we find him, when a mere youth, in the metropolis.

The next authentic fact respecting his early history is found in a note appended by Mrs. Sadleir, the daughter of Sir Edward Coke, to one of Williams's letters addressed to herself:—"This Roger Williams, when he was a youth, would, in a short-hand, take sermons and speeches in the Star Chamber, and present them to my dear father. He, seeing so hopeful a youth, took such liking to him that he sent him in to Sutton's Hospital."* His age at that time could not have been more than fifteen years. This incident seems to indicate that his parents were in a respectable station in life, since it is evident he had received a good elementary education; and the circumstance that his short-hand notes attracted the attention of the great lawyer is a proof of his early mental superiority.

The records of Sutton's Hospital—now the Charter House—furnish no other particulars than the following—that Roger Williams was elected a scholar of that institution, June 25, 1621, and that he obtained an exhibition, July 9, 1624.

It appears from the register of his matriculation, at Oxford, to which we have already referred, that he entered at Jesus college, April 30, 1624. Cayo, the place of his birth, with Llansawell, is a consolidated parish, the great tithes of which belong to the head of Jesus College. This may account for his being a member of that college, and, perhaps, supported, in part, by the head. It may be added, that this college was founded by Dr. Hugh Price, in 1571, to extend the benefits of learning to the natives of Wales, and has always been a favorite resort of students from the Principality. The records furnish no evidence how long he remained at

* MS. letter of Roger Williams to Mrs. Sadleir in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

the university, but his writings testify that he prosecuted his studies with industry, and drank deeply at the fountains of learning. At that period, logic and the classics formed the chief subjects of study in the prescribed course; but he devoted himself to other collateral branches. He was well versed in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and several of the modern languages. There is a tradition that, after the completion of his residence at Oxford, he commenced the study of the law under the patronage of Sir Edward Coke; but, however this may be, the legal documents which proceeded from his pen exhibit a knowledge of general principles of equity and jurisprudence, that would have been creditable to the profession. This knowledge qualified him for his duties as legislator of the colony he founded, and was of great value to him in his subsequent course. It is quite evident, however, that the ministry of the gospel was his chosen pursuit; for he had been admitted to orders, in the church of England, previous to his arrival in America. It is said, that he assumed, while in England, the charge of a parish, and that he was held in high repute as a preacher. In his rejoinder to the Rev. John Cotton he speaks of riding together with that gentleman and the Rev. Mr. Hooker to and from Sempringham, Lincolnshire. Mr. Cotton was minister of Boston, in that county, for nearly twenty years before he settled in Massachusetts. The excellent Dr. Williams was at that time the bishop of Lincoln, who connived at the nonconformists, and spoke with some keenness against the ceremonies of the church. The subject of our narrative had already embraced the tenets of the persecuted puritans, and all these circumstances render it very probable that his charge was in the diocese of Lincoln.

The intolerable oppressions of Laud, and the arrogant demand of absolute submission to the ceremonies of the English Church, forced him to seek that religious liberty amid the wilds of America that was denied to him in the mother

country. Higginson, Cotton, Hooker, and many other learned and pious ministers, had been silenced, and Williams could not expect that he would be suffered to preach, for his refusal to conform appears to have been most decided. We are not surprised, therefore, to find him among the early emigrants to New England.

CHAPTER III.

ROGER WILLIAMS EMBARKS FOR AMERICA—ARRIVES IN BOSTON—HIS OPINIONS ON ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY—HE IS INVITED TO SALEM—GENERAL COURT INTERFERES—REMOVES TO PLYMOUTH.

On the 5th of February, 1631, a ship from Bristol sailed into Boston harbor, and, after a tempestuous voyage of sixty-six days, the exiles with joy espied the heights of the three-hilled city. It was the *Lyon*, Captain William Pierce. Among the passengers was a "young minister, godly and zealous, having precious" gifts, whose mind was of a philosophic cast, and whose opinions were marked by a strong individuality. This minister was Roger Williams. His arrival is recorded by Governor Winthrop, in his Journal,* and appears to have occasioned joy to the churches of the infant colony. He was accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Mary Williams, a lady who appears to have been of a kindred spirit, and who lived to share with her husband the vicissitudes of life for half a century.

When Williams first became a resident of the new city of the pilgrims, the land of hope and promise,

"The ark of freedom and of God."

nothing less than a special revelation from heaven would have led him to anticipate a second exile, and that exile to be inflicted by the hands of brethren. But it is our painful duty to record the mortifying fact, that he soon found the civil and ecclesiastical authorities arrayed against him, and

* Vol. i. pp. 41, 42.

that the *lords brethren* of Massachusetts were in some respects as intolerant as the *lords bishops* of England. The grand idea that "a most flourishing civil state may stand, and be best maintained, with a full liberty in religious concernments," had not yet found a place in the minds of men, and received no echo in the hearts of the colonists. Liberty of conscience had been held and asserted, in a modified form, by the Waldenses, by Helwisse, by Luther and his associates, and by others of a former age; but to Roger Williams belongs the high honor of having introduced it into legislation. The great doctrine he announced, when he first trod the shores of New England, and which he defended through life, was,—that the civil magistrate should restrain crime, but had no right interfere in matters of conscience, and to punish for heresy or apostacy. He contended that "the doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience is most evidently and lamentably contrary to the doctrine of Christ Jesus"—that the power of the civil magistrate "extends only to the bodies, and goods, and outward estate of men."* "The removal of the yoke of soul oppression, as it will prove an act of mercy and righteousness to the enslaved nations, so it is of binding force to engage the whole and every interest and conscience to preserve the common liberty and peace."† He maintained that "the people were the origin of all free power in government," but that they were "not invested by Christ Jesus with power to rule in his church; that they could give no such power to the magistrate, and that to "introduce the civil sword" into the kingdom of Christ was "to confound heaven and earth, and lay all upon heaps of confusion." He maintained the novel doctrine, that the ecclestiastical should be totally separated from the civil power; and boldly demanded that the church and the magistracy should each act within its appropriate sphere.

* Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered.

† "Hireling Ministry," p. 29.

A few weeks after his arrival, Mr. Williams was called by the church at Salem to become an assistant to their pastor, the Rev. Mr. Skelton, as teacher, in the place of the learned and accomplished Higginson, who had died a few months before. In the ecclesiastical polity of the New England churches, the offices of pastor and teacher were considered as distinct, and both deemed essential to the welfare of a church. Mr. Williams accepted the invitation, and commenced his ministry at Salem; but the civil authority immediately interfered to prevent his settlement. The reasons assigned by the magistrates for this interposition, in the letter which they addressed to Mr. Endicott, are, first, that Mr. Williams had refused to join with the congregation at Boston, because they would not declare their repentance for having held communion with the church of England while they lived there; secondly, that he "had declared his opinion that the magistrate might not punish a breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence that was a breach of the first table."

The former of these charges is so very indefinite that it is difficult to ascertain the degree of criminality which Mr. Williams attributed to the conduct of the Boston church, and to what extent he wished its members to declare their repentance. Hooker, Higginson, and Cotton were all of them ministers of the church of England, and not separatists, when they landed in Massachusetts, and Governor Winthrop and his associates acknowledged themselves members at the moment of their departure. Many good men considered this conformity highly censurable, tending to sanction the corruptions of the church and her cruelties and oppressions. It is not surprising that Mr. Williams, having deeply felt the intolerance of the hierarchy, was disinclined to join with those who connived at her unscriptural requirements, and yielded to her arrogant demand of absolute submission. "My own voluntary withdrawing from all the churches resolved to con-

tinue in persecuting the witnesses of the Lord—presenting light unto them—I confess it was my own voluntary act; yea, I hope the act of the Lord Jesus, sounding forth in me the blast, which shall in his own holy season cast down the strength and confidence of those inventions of men."* The real offence of Williams was probably this, that having such strong and conscientious objections to the church of England, he would not consent to unite in membership with a congregation that still professed to be connected with it. That he was not guilty of the uncharitableness and bigotry with which he was charged is evident from a circumstance recorded by Winthrop, which shows that, a few months afterwards, when Williams was a minister of the church at Plymouth, he received Governor Winthrop and other gentlemen from Boston at the communion in his own church.† Williams did not deny that multitudes of persons in national churches are to be regarded true Christians, but he maintained that "every national church is of a vicious constitution, and that a majority in such churches are unregenerate."

The other charge, that Williams denied the power of the civil magistrate to punish men for the neglect, or the erroneous performance, of their duties to God, is one which, at the present day, it is not necessary to discuss or to vindicate. The great doctrine, that man is accountable to his Maker alone for his religious belief and practice, has long been the opinion in America, and is rapidly pervading every portion of the civilized world. The religious relations, rights, and obligations of all men are substantially the same, and experience, in all ages, demonstrates the manifold evils which spring from the civil ruler being entrusted with power to regulate the intercourse between man and the Supreme Potentate—the Sovereign of minds—the Lord of conscience.

On the 12th of April, 1631, Mr. Williams was settled as

* Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered, p. 3.

† Winthrop, vol. i. p. 91.

a minister of the church at Salem, the same day on which the magistrates were assembled at Boston to express their disapprobation of the measure, and to desire the church to forbear any further proceeding. This arbitrary interference of the general court of the colony with the rights of the Salem church will not now be justified by any man who believes that Christ is the only legislator in his kingdom.

To the civil government of the colony he was willing to yield due submission, and on the 18th of the following May he took the customary oath on his admission as a freeman. This fact deserves notice because it refutes another charge which has been brought against him, that he refused to take an oath. It is worthy of notice, also, that on the very day he was admitted a citizen of the colony, the general court "ordered and agreed that, for the time to come, no man shall be admitted to the freedom of this body politic but such as are members of some of the churches within the limits of the same." The ecclesiastical polity established was a sort of theocracy. The government belonged solely to the "brethren." "Not only was the door of calling to magistracy shut against natural and unregenerate men, though excellently fitted for civil offices, but also against the best and ablest servants of God, except they be entered into church estate."* This, according to Williams, was "to pluck up the roots and foundations of all common society in the world, to turn the garden and paradise of the church and saints into the field of the civil state of the world, and to reduce the world to the first chaos or confusion." This unjust law the colony was afterwards forced to repeal. It was soon found to operate as a bribe to hypocrisy, rendering church-membership subservient to political objects, and in its subsequent results destroyed the harmony of the colony.

The settlement of Mr. Williams at Salem was destined to be of short continuance. Disregarding the wishes and ad-

* "Bloudy Tenant," p. 287.

vice of the authorities in calling him to be their minister, the church had incurred the disapprobation of the magistrates, and raised a storm of persecution, so that before the close of summer he sought a residence in the colony of Plymouth. That his removal from Salem was not his own choice, or the desire of the church, is evident from the high place he held in their affections during his whole life, and his return to that town by their invitation, two years after, to resume among them his ministerial labors.

Mr. Williams was received with much respect at Plymouth, and was settled as assistant to the pastor, the Rev. Ralph Smith. Governor Bradford says, "he was freely entertained among us, according to our poor ability, exercised his gifts among us, and after some time was admitted a member of the church, and his teaching well approved; for the benefit whereof I shall bless God, and am thankful to him ever for his sharpest admonitions and reproofs, so far as they agree with truth."*

The puritans who settled at Plymouth were organized as a church before they left Holland, and were separated entirely from the church of England. They recognized one important principle which manifested a more enlightened and liberal spirit than their brethren of Massachusetts Bay, which was, that ecclesiastical censures were wholly spiritual, and not to be accompanied with temporal penalties. An adherence to this principle greatly contributed to the peace and prosperity of that colony.

During the residence of Mr. Williams at Plymouth, Governor Winthrop, with the Rev. Mr. Wilson, pastor of the Boston church, and other gentlemen, visited that town, and communed with the church there: a circumstance to which we have already adverted. An account of the visit is recorded in Winthrop's Journal, and is an interesting illustration of some of their primitive customs.

* Prince, p. 377.

"1632; September 25.—The governor of Plymouth, Mr. William Bradford (a very discreet and grave man), with Mr. Brewster, the elder, and some others, came forth and met them without the town, and conducted them to the governor's house, where they were very kindly entertained and feasted every day at several houses. On the Lord's-day, there was a sacrament, which they did partake in; and in the afternoon Mr. Roger Williams (according to their custom) propounded a question, to which the pastor, Mr. Smith, spoke briefly; then Mr. Williams prophesied; and after, the governor of Plymouth spoke to the question; after him, the elder; then some two or three more of the congregation. Then the elder desired the governor of Massachusetts and Mr. Wilson to speak to it, which they did. When this was ended, the deacon, Mr. Fuller, put the congregation in mind of their duty of contribution; whereupon the governor and all the rest went down to the deacon's seat, and put into the box, and then returned."*

In his residence at Plymouth, we trace the hand of that Divine Being, who was soon to employ him as an honored instrument in establishing a new colony, and also in preserving New England from the merciless fury of the Indians. While here, he enjoyed frequent opportunities of friendly intercourse with their most celebrated chiefs, and by acts of kindness secured their confidence. At this period, also, he made excursions among these stern chiefs and warriors to learn their customs and language. In a letter written many years afterwards, he says: "God was pleased to give me a painful, patient spirit, to lodge with them in their filthy, smoky holes, even while I lived at Plymouth and Salem, to gain their tongue." This friendly intimacy with the sachems, and knowledge of their language, was of inestimable advantage to him in his future career, in the purchase of lands, and in gaining an influence among the Indians which

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 91.

no other person ever obtained. His sympathies, also, were awakened for their spiritual condition: and he felt an ardent desire that they might be converted to the christian faith. In one of his letters, he says: "My soul's desire was to do the native's good;" and his subsequent course of life shows how intensely his heart was fixed on their subjection to the spiritual and peaceful reign of Christ.

Mr. Williams, after remaining about two years at Plymouth, was invited to return to Salem to assist Mr. Skelton, whose declining health unfitted him for the performance of his ministerial duties.* Some of the members of the church at Plymouth were so attached to his ministry, that, after ineffectual efforts to detain him, they were induced to transfer their residence to Salem.

* Backus, vol. i, p. 56.

CHAPTER IV.

WILLIAMS RETURNS TO SALEM—DISAPPROVES OF THE MINISTER'S MEETINGS—HIS TREATISE AGAINST THE KING'S PATENT—CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE CROSS IN THE MILITARY COLORS.

In August, 1633, Mr. Williams returned to Salem, and resumed his ministerial labors in that place as an assistant to the Rev. Mr. Skelton; and about a year afterwards, on the death of Mr. Skelton, he was elected to the office of teacher of the church.

The experience of ecclesiastical usurpation in England appears to have excited both the venerable Skelton and Mr. Williams to express an apprehension that the tendency of a ministers' meeting, recently established, was ominous of an encroachment upon the independence of the churches and liberty of conscience. Winthrop says in his Journal, under date November, 1633: "The ministers in the Bay and Saugus did meet once a fortnight, at one of their houses, by course, where some question of moment was debated. Mr. Skelton, the pastor of Salem, and Mr. Williams, who was removed from Plymouth thither (but not in any office, though he exercised by way of prophecy), took some exception against it, as fearing it might grow in time to a presbytery or superintendency, to the prejudice of the church's liberties. But this fear was without cause; for they were all clear in that point, that no church or person can have power over another church; neither did they, in their meetings, exercise any such jurisdiction."*

* Vol. i, p. 116.

This meeting was probably formed for the purpose of mutual improvement and consultation respecting the interests of religion; but Messrs. Skelton and Williams undoubtedly perceived something which they deemed incompatible with their views of church government.

Other opportunities for hostility to Mr. Williams were soon found by the magistrates and ministers. In December 27, 1633, "the governor and assistants met at Boston, and took into consideration a treatise which Mr. Williams (then of Salem) had sent to them, and which he had formerly written to the governor and council of Plymouth, wherein, among other things, he disputed their right to the lands they possessed here, and concluded that, claiming by the king's grant, they could have no title, nor otherwise except they compounded with the natives."*

It is to be regretted that the treatise, which occasioned these transactions, has not been preserved. In Coddington's Letter against Williams, inserted at the close of Fox's Reply, he is charged with having "written a quarto against the king's patent and authority," and it was probably this book to which Mr. Coddington alluded. Mr. Williams clearly perceived the injustice of the claim to occupy the lands which belonged to the natives merely on the ground of prior discovery, and the character and habits of the Indians. They were independent tribes; in no sense the subjects of the king of England, and his charter could not convey to the colonists a title he did not himself possess.

The "sin of the patents" which lay so heavy upon his mind was, that therein "christian-kings (so-called) are invested with a right, by virtue of their *christianity*, to take and give away the lands and countries of other men." And he says that "before his troubles and banishment, he drew up a letter, not without the approbation of some of the chiefs of New England, then tender also upon this point before

* Winthrop, vol. i, p. 122.

God, directed unto the king himself, humbly acknowledging the evil of THAT PART of the patent which respects the donation of lands," &c.* The colonists themselves bought, almost invariably, the lands of the natives for such compensation as satisfied the Indians, thus acting on the very principle Williams advocated. Cotton Mather asserts, that, "notwithstanding the patent which they had for the country, they fairly purchased of the natives the several tracts of land which they afterwards possessed."†

President Dwight observes that, "exclusively of the country of the Pequods, the inhabitants of Connecticut bought, unless I am deceived, every inch of ground contained within that colony, of its native proprietors. The people of Rhode Island, Plymouth, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, proceeded wholly in the same equitable manner. Until Philip's war, in 1675, not a single foot of ground was claimed or occupied by the colonists on any other score but that of fair purchase."‡ These facts are highly honorable to the pilgrims, and Roger Williams is entitled to praise for his steady advocacy of this policy from the beginning. The king, in his patent, styles himself "the sovereign lord" of the whole continent, and gives and grants to the Plymouth Company a large part of it, from sea to sea, without intimating that any rights belonged to the natives. Williams, being a warm friend to the Indians, and considering the patent a flagrant usurpation of their rights, may have put upon its lofty royal style too rigid a construction.

His treatise, it appears, discussed merely the abstract question, and was a private communication to the governor and other gentlemen of Plymouth. There is no evidence that he questioned the authority of the charter, so far as it could operate without infringing on the rights of the Indians, and at a meeting of the governor and council, a month after-

* Reply to Cotton on the "Bloudy Tenet," pp. 276, 277.

† "Magnalia," book i. c. 5. ‡ Dwight's Travel's vol. i. p. 167.

wards, they acknowledged that they had taken unnecessary offence.* The conduct of Williams on this occasion to the magistrates and clergy was mild and conciliating; and, although he did not retract his opinions, he offered to burn the offensive book, and furnished satisfactory evidence of his "loyalty."

Williams was now permitted, for a short period, to exercise his ministerial labors at Salem in peace. He was acceptable as a preacher; and it is an evidence of the warm attachment of the people, that, soon after the death of Mr. Skelton, in August, 1634, they invited him to become their teacher. The magistrates sent to the church, requesting they would not appoint him; but they persisted, and Williams was regularly introduced to the office. This was pronounced by the magistrates and ministers "great contempt of authority;" and we shall soon see how it was punished.

The inflexibility of Williams's principles, and his determination to exhibit them in practice, appear, occasionally, to have led him to extreme views on some points. But, whatever these defects may have been, they were less than those of his contemporaries, and cast no real blemish on his heroic character. His adversaries have brought two charges against him, which, though trivial, may deserve a passing remark. One is, that he preached upon the duty of females to wear veils in religious assemblies. No record of his real sentiments on this frivolous subject now exists, and Dr. Bentley asserts, that Mr. Endicott had introduced it before the arrival of Williams, and that the latter felt little interest in the matter. The other charge is, that, in consequence of Williams's preaching, Mr. Endicott cut the cross out of the military colors, as a relic of popish superstition. This act was, doubtless, unjustifiable, because the colors being established by the king, ought to have been viewed as a mere civil regulation. There is no evidence, however, that Will-

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 123.

iams advised the measure, and it appears rather to have been the result of an inference drawn from the doctrine he maintained on the unlawfulness of using symbols which had been desecrated in the service of popery.*

Mr. Endicott deemed it his duty, as a magistrate, to remove the cross from the colors, and as a punishment for this act, he was not permitted to hold any office for one year. The question about the lawfulness of the cross was warmly agitated at the time, and the matter was finally settled by the magistrates commanding that the cross be struck out of the colors for the trained bands, but retained in the banners of the castle, and of vessels in the harbor. That such trivial controversies should have occupied so much of the attention of grave men, may now excite our surprise.

* Knowles, pp. 61, 62.

CHAPTER V.

PROCEEDINGS WHICH LED TO THE BANISHMENT OF ROGER WILLIAMS—HIS OPPOSITION TO THE FREEMAN'S OATH —VARIOUS CHARGES AGAINST HIM—THE DECREE OF BANISHMENT—HE LEAVES SALEM.

Of the true cause of the banishment of Williams, no account can be relied on but that of Governor Winthrop. The other early writers were so influenced by prejudice, that they exhibit a lamentable want of impartiality. Hubbard remarks, "They passed a sentence of banishment against him, as a disturber of the peace, both of the church and commonwealth." Cotton Mather says, "He had a windmill in his head." All the ministers were convened at the trial of Williams, and they were all opposed to his sentiments. Hubbard and Mather gathered their reports from his opponents. Winthrop, who wrote at the time, has recorded the proceedings in his Journal. His account is as follows:—"In April, 1635, the court summoned Williams to appear at Boston. The occasion was, that he had taught publicly that a magistrate ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man; for that we thereby have communion with a wicked man in the worship of God, and cause him to take the name of God in vain. He was heard before all the ministers and very clearly confuted." Had Williams recorded the event, he would, no doubt, have given a different version respecting the force of the arguments.

It appears from a passage in the appendix to the "Hireling Ministry none of Christ's," that he considered taking an oath to be an act of worship; "that a Christian might

take one on proper occasions, though not for trivial causes—that an irreligious man could not sincerely perform this act of worship—and that no man ought to be forced to perform this any more than any other act of worship." His singular views of the nature of oaths, it appears, were formed before he left England; probably from having observed the light manner in which they were administered indiscriminately to the pious and profane. In his reply to George Fox, Mr. Williams declares, that he has submitted to the loss of large sums "in the chancery in England," rather than yield to the offensive formality of kissing the Bible, holding up the hand, &c., though he did not object to taking the oath without them; and the judges, he says, "told me they would rest in my testimony and way of swearing, but they could not dispense with me without an act of parliament."

There is reason to believe, however, that Williams's offence respecting oaths consisted not so much in his abstract objections to their use, as in his opposition to what is known by the name of the "Freeman's Oath." "The magistrates and other members of the general court," says Mr. Cotton, "upon intelligence of some episcopal and malignant practices against the country, made an order of court to take trial of the fidelity of the people, not by imposing upon them, but by offering to them, an oath of fidelity, that in case any should refuse to take it, they might not betrust them with place of public charge and command."* This oath virtually transferred the obligations of allegiance from the king to the government of Massachusetts. Mr. Cotton says that the oath was only *offered*, not imposed; but it was, by a subsequent act of the court, enforced on every man of sixteen years of age, and upwards, upon the penalty of his being punished, in case of refusing to take it, at the discretion of the court.† Mr. Williams opposed the oath, as contrary to the charter, inconsistent with the duty of British subjects,

* "Tenent Washed," pp. 28, 29. † Backus, vol. i. p. 62.

and with his great principle of unfettered religious liberty. His opposition was so determined, that "the court was forced to desist from that proceeding."

The controversy between Mr. Williams and the civil and ecclesiastical heads of the colony was becoming, every day, more violent. The magistrates enacted a law, requiring every man to attend public worship, and to contribute to its support, which was denounced by Williams as a violation of natural rights. "No one," said he, "should be bound to maintain a worship against his own consent."

In July, 1635, he was again summoned to Boston, to answer to the charges brought against him at the general court which was then in session. He was accused of maintaining the following dangerous opinions:—"First, That the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the civil peace. Secondly, That he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man. Thirdly, That a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, child, &c. Fourthly, That a man ought not to give thanks after sacrament, nor after meat, &c."* The ministers were requested by the magistrates to be present on this occasion, and to give their advice. They "professedly declared," that Mr. Williams deserved to be banished from the colony for maintaining the doctrine, "that the civil magistrate might not intermeddle even to stop a church from heresy and apostasy;" and that the churches ought to request the magistrates to remove him.

The first two of the above charges we have already considered. The reader will observe that Governor Winthrop has candidly acknnowledged that Roger Williams allowed it to be right for the magistrate to punish breaches of the first table, when they disturbed the civil peace—a fact which abundantly proves that he fully admitted the just claims of civil government.

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 162.

The third charge—admitting it to be an accurate expression of the views which he held—shows that he carried to an extreme an objection arising from the practice in England, where many who united in the petitions in the Book of Common Prayer were notoriously profligate.* Williams's own statement of the opinions he entertained on two of the above charges was, "that it is not lawful to call a wicked person to swear, or to pray, as being actions of God's worship."†

With respect to the fourth charge—"that a man ought not to give thanks *after* sacrament, nor *after* meat"—it may be remarked that Roger Williams, in this opinion, anticipated the practice of many enlightened Christians of the present day, who consider it the most scriptural.

It may now almost excite a smile that charges such as these should be brought against a man as *crimes*, before a civil tribunal. When Williams was summoned before the general court, there is no evidence that there was any examination of witnesses, or any hearing of counsel. His "opinions were adjudged by all, magistrates and ministers, to be erroneous and very dangerous;" and, after long debate, "time was given to him, and the church at Salem, to consider of these things till the next general court, and then either to give satisfaction to the court, or else to expect the sentence." Three days after the session of the court abovementioned, as Winthrop informs us, the "Salem men had preferred a petition, at the last general court, for some land in Marblehead Neck, which they did challenge as belonging to their town; but because they had chosen Mr. Williams their teacher, while he had stood under question of authority, and so offered contempt to the magistrates, &c., their petition was refused. . . . Upon this, the church at Salem write to other churches to admonish the magistrates of this as a heinous sin, and likewise the deputies; for which, at the

* Knowles, p. 69.

† Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered, chap. 3.

next general court, their deputies were not received until they should give satisfaction about the letter."* Thus they refused to Salem a civil right, as a mode of punishing the church for adhering to their pastor. Such an act of flagrant injustice forcibly illustrates the danger of a union between the civil and ecclesiastical power! After the banishment of Williams, the land in question was granted to the people of Salem, but the postponement was evidently designed to induce them to consent to his removal. This attack upon civil liberty induced Williams, in conjunction with his church, to write "Letters of Admonition unto all the Churches whereof any of the magistrates were members, that they might admonish the magistrates of their injustice;" and when the churches, in consequence of the threatening of the magistrates, recanted, he wrote a letter to his own church, exhorting them to withdraw communion from these churches.

These proceedings of Williams and his church were followed by another atrocious violation of their rights. The deputies of Salem were deprived of their seats until apology was made; and the principal deputy, Mr. Endicott, was imprisoned, for justifying the letter of Williams. The records of the court, also contain the following remarkable decree, which illustrates the inquisitorial spirit of that tribunal:— "Mr. Samuel Sharpe is enjoined to appear at the next particular court, to answer for the letter that came from the church of Salem, as also *to bring the names of those that will justify the same;* or else to acknowledge his offence, under his own hand for his own particular."†

The next general court was held in October, 1635, when Roger Williams was again summoned for the last time, "all the ministers in the Bay being desired to be present;" and "Mr. Hooker was chosen to dispute with him, but could not reduce him from any of his errors. So, the next morning,

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 164.

† Savage's Winthrop, vol. i. p. 167, note.

the court sentenced him to depart out of our jurisdiction within six weeks, all the ministers, save one, approving the sentence."* The act of banishment, as it stands upon the colonial records, is in these words:—"Whereas Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates; as also writ letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retraction; it is, therefore, ordered that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing, which, if he neglect to perform, it shall be lawful for the governor and two of the magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without license from the court." This cruel and unjustifiable sentence was passed on the 3rd of November. Neal, in his History of New England, acknowledges that on the final passing of the act "the whole town of Salem was in an uproar, for he was esteemed an honest, disinterested man, and of popular talents in the pulpit." His most bitter opponents confessed that, both at Plymouth and Salem, he was respected and beloved as a pious man and an able minister.

The health of Williams was greatly impaired by his severe trials and excessive labors, and he received permission to remain at Salem till Spring. But complaints were soon made to the court that he would not refrain, *in his own house*, from uttering his opinions—that many people, "taken with an apprehension of his godliness," resorted there to listen to his teachings—that he had drawn above twenty persons to his opinion—and that he was preparing to form a plantation about Narraganset Bay.

This information led the court to resolve to send him to England, by a ship then lying in the harbor ready for sea.

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 171.

On the 11th of January, he received another summons to attend the court assembled at Boston, but he refused to obey: his answer was conveyed to the magistrates by "divers of the people of Salem."

The magistrates, determining not to be defeated, immediately sent a small sloop to Salem, with a commission to Captain Underhill to apprehend him and carry him on board the ship about to sail to England; but when the officers "came to his house, they found he had gone three days before, but whither they could not learn."*

In presenting an account of the proceedings which led to the banishment of Roger Williams, the writer has aimed at strict impartiality, and has, therefore, availed himself, as much as possible, of the very language of his authorities. It must be apparent to every candid person, that the true cause may be found in the great doctrine which has immortalized his name—that THE CIVIL POWER HAS NO JURISDICTION OVER THE CONSCIENCE. The object of the government in directing his immediate apprehension was, doubtless, to prevent the establishment of a colony in which this great principle should be embodied. But their design, by the interposition of Divine Providence, was happily frustrated; and he was afterwards the instrument of inconceivable good to that very community which had driven him into exile.

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 175.

CHAPTER VI.

WILLIAMS'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE WILDERNESS TO NARRAGANSETT BAY — HE VISITS MASSASSOIT — HE PROCEEDS TO SEEKONK, AND BEGINS A SETTLEMENT — HE CROSSES THE RIVER, AND FOUNDS THE TOWN OF PROVIDENCE.

ABOUT the middle of January, 1636, the coldest month of a New England winter, a solitary pilgrim might have been seen wandering amidst primeval forests, inhabited only by savages and beasts of prey, in quest of a refuge from the hand of ecclesiastical tyranny. He was forced to leave his wife and young children, and to depart in secresy and haste, in order to escape the warrant which would have compelled him on board the ship waiting to convey him back to England.

"Morn came at last; and by the dawning day
Our founder rose, his secret flight to take;
His wife and infant still in slumber lay.

'Mary!' (she woke) 'prepare the meet attire,
My pocket-compass, and my mantle strong;
My flint and steel, to yield a needful fire;
Food for a week if that be not too long;
My hatchet, too—its service I require
To clip my fuel, desert wilds among.
With these I go to found, in forests drear,
A state where none shall persecution fear.' "*

Roger Williams has left no detailed account of his adventurous journey, but occasional allusions in his writings show

* "What-cheer; or, Roger Williams in Banisment."

how severe must have been his sufferings. The chief incidents are found in a letter to his friend, Major Mason, of Connecticut, written thirty-five years after, from which we make the following extracts. It is dated Providence, June 22, 1670.

"When I was unkindly, and unchristianly, as I believe, driven from my house, and land, and wife, and children, in the midst of a New England winter, now about thirty-five years past, at Salem, that ever-honored governor, Mr. Winthrop, privately wrote to me to steer my course to the Narragansett Bay and Indians, for many high and heavenly and public ends, encouraging me, from the freeness of the place from any English claims or patents. I took his prudent motion as a hint and voice from God, and, waiving all other thoughts and motions, I steered my course from Salem—though in winter-snow, which I yet feel—unto these parts, wherein I may say *Peniel*, that is, I have seen the face of God.

"I first pitched, and began to build and plant at Seekonk; but I received a letter from my ancient friend, Mr. Winslow, then governor of Plymouth, professing his own and others' love and respect to me, yet lovingly advising me, since I was fallen into the edge of their bounds, and they were loth to displease the Bay, to remove but to the other side of the water; and then he said I had the country free before me, and might be as free as themselves, and we should be loving neighbors together. These were the joint understandings of these two wise and eminently christian governors, and others, in their day, together with their counsel and advice as to the freedom and vacancy of this place, which in this respect, and many other providences of the Most Holy and Only Wise, I called *Providence*.

"Sometime after, the Plymouth great Sachem, Ousamaquin,* upon occasion, affirming that Providence was his land,

* Commonly called Massasoit.

and therefore Plymouth's land, and some resenting it, the then prudent and godly governor, Mr. Bradford, and others of his godly council, answered,—that if, after due examination, it should be found true what the barbarian said, yet having to my loss of a harvest that year, been now—though by their gentle advice—as good as banished from Plymouth as from the Massachusetts, and I had quietly and patiently departed from them, at their motion, to the place where now I was, I should not be molested and tossed up and down again while they had breath in their bodies. And surely between those, my friends of the Bay and Plymouth, I was sorely tossed, for one fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean, beside the yearly loss of no small matter in my trading with English and natives, being debarred from Boston, the chief mart and port of New England. God knows that many thousand pounds cannot repay the losses I have sustained. It lies upon the Massachusetts and me, yea, and other colonies joining with them, to examine with fear and trembling, before the eyes of flaming fire, the true cause of all my sorrows and sufferings. It pleased the Father of Spirits to touch many hearts dear to him with some relentings; amongst which that great and pious soul, Mr. Winslow, melted, and kindly visited me, at Providence, and put a piece of gold into the hands of my wife for our supply."*

In another letter, Williams says:—"It pleased the Most High to direct my steps into this bay, by the loving, private advice of the ever-honored soul, Mr. John Winthrop, the grandfather, who, though he were carried with the stream for my banishment, yet he tenderly loved me to his last breath." Governor Winthrop's friendship for Williams was manifested afterwards on various occasions, and he advised him to leave the colony, as a measure which he doubtless thought the public peace required. At the time of his ban-

* Letter to Mason. Mass. Hist. Coll. vol. i. p. 275.

ishment, Mr. Haynes was governor. Mr. Winthrop having been supplanted in the chief magistracy of the colony.

When Roger Williams left Salem, it appears that he made his way through the desolate wilderness to Ousamequin, or Massasoit, the sachem of the Pokanokets, who resided at Mount Hope, near the present town of Bristol, Rhode Island. This famous chief occupied the country north from Mount Hope, as far as Charles River. He had known Mr. Williams at Plymouth, and had often received from him tokens of kindness, and now the aged sachem extended to the friendless exile hospitality and protection. Mr. Williams obtained from this chief a tract of land on the Seekonk River, where he was soon joined by several of his friends from Salem. This territory was within the limits of the Plymouth colony; and, under a mistaken apprehension as to the bounds of the patent, his first location was on the east side of the Seekonk River, which separates Massachusetts from Rhode Island. At this place, where he had begun to build and plant, new and unexpected disappointments awaited him, for he received intelligence from his friend, Governor Winslow, that he had "fallen into the edge of their bounds." Although Williams recognized the Indians as the only rightful proprietors of the land, and had bought a title from their chief sachem, yet he immediately resolved to comply with the friendly advice of the governor of Plymouth. He accordingly embarked in a canoe, with five others, and proceeded down the Seekonk river, in quest of another spot to found a separate colony, where the secular arm should have no dictation or control in the concerns of religion. Tradition reports, that as the little bark approached the eastern banks of the river, at a place now called Whatcheer Cove, Williams saw a company of Indians on the heights of the western banks of the stream, who greeted him with the friendly salutation, "*Wha-cheer, netop? Wha-cheer?*"*

* The common English phrase, What cheer; equivalent to *How do you do?* they had learnt from the colonists. *Netop* means *friend.*

After landing and exchanging salutations with the natives, he again embarked, and passing round the headlands, now known as India Point and Fox Point, he proceeded up the river on the west side of the peninsula to a spot near the mouth of the Mooshausick. Here Williams and his companions landed, and upon the slope of the hill that rises from the river commenced the first settlement of Rhode Island.

> "Oh, call it holy ground,
> The soil where first they trod,
> They have left unstained what there they found,
> Freedom to worship God."

The town here founded he named Providence, in grateful remembrance of "God's merciful providence to him in his distress." It was in the spring of 1636—probably in the latter part of June—that this memorable event occurred. Here, after enduring so many hardships, was the exiled confessor to find the haven of rest, and to lay the foundations of a state, which should "be for a shelter to persons distressed for conscience." The "fourteen weeks he was sorely tossed, in a bitter winter season," he probably spent in journeying among the Indian tribes, in visiting their chiefs, and in adjusting matters for his permanent settlement. His wanderings were in a dense forest, covered with the deep snows of winter, tracked by wild beasts, where the scream of the panther, the yell of the tiger, and the howl of the wolf, were often heard.

The following lines, by a Rhode Island poet, present a graphic illustration of the perils to which Williams was exposed:—

> "Growling they come, and in dark groups they stand,
> Show the white fang, and roll the bright'ning eye;
> Till, urged by famine's rage, the shaggy band
> Seemed the flame's bright terrors to defy.
> Then, 'mid the group he hurled the blazing brand—
> Swift they disperse, and raise the scattered cry;

But, rallying, soon back to the siege they came,
And scarce their rage paused at the mounting flame.

Yet Williams deemed that persecution took
A form in them less odious than in men;
He on their dreary *solitude had broke,*—
Aye, and had *trespassed on their native glen.*
His *human shape* they scarcely too might brook,
For it had been an enemy to them;
But bigot man did into *conscience look,*
And for the secret thought his *brother* struck."*

In reflecting upon Williams and his little band of exiles in 1636, our minds must be forcibly struck by the contrast the country now presents. The primeval forests have fallen beneath the woodman's axe; the war-whoop of the savage has long since died away; cultivation enriches the hills, and smiles in the valleys; agriculture has gained her triumphs on the land, and commerce upon the seas; schools, colleges, and churches, adorn the banks of the Mooshausick, and a flourishing commonwealth evinces that the broadest religious equality is favorable to the progress of civilization and of piety.

* Whatcheer; or, Roger Williams in Banishment. A Poem. by the late Hon. Job. Durfee, LL. D., Chief Justice of the State of Rhode Island. The London Eclectic Review for July, 1838, contains a eulogistic critique on this poem, from the pen of John Foster.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INDIAN TRIBES IN NEW ENGLAND—PURCHASE OF LANDS FROM THE INDIANS—SETTLEMENT OF THE COLONY AT PROVIDENCE—FREEDOM OF ITS GOVERNMENT.

THE history of Roger Williams is so intimately connected with that of the Indians, that it is necessary here to give a brief sketch of the principal tribes occupying New England when it was first settled by the English. The Pokanokets inhabited the territory of the colony of Plymouth. This tribe included several tributaries, among whom were the Wampanoags, the particular tribe of Massasoit, who welcomed the pilgrims to the soil of New England, and opened his lodge to shelter the founder of Rhode Island. The Pokanokets and several other tribes, a short period before the arrival of the English, had been diminished by the ravages of a pestilence to so frightful an extent, that some of the tribes were almost extinct. The Narragansetts held dominion over nearly all the territory which afterwards formed the colony of Rhode Island, including the Islands in the Bay, and a portion of Long Island. They were the most civilized and the most faithful to the English of all the New England tribes. They had cultivated some of their lands, and were skilful in making *wampum*, or *wampumpeag*—a kind of beads made of shells, in use among the natives as money. They were also the most ingenious manufacturers of pendants, bracelets, stone tobacco-pipes, and earthen vessels for cooking and other domestic uses.* They were a numerous tribe,

* Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 406.

and though less warlike than their neighbors, they could raise more than four thousand fighting-men. The Pequods and Mohegans, the fiercest and most warlike of the New England savages, occupied the greater part of that which is now the state of Connecticut. They were treacherous as well as powerful, and were hostile to the English. The Massachusetts dwelt chiefly about the bay which bears their name.

The chiefs, or sachems, of the several Indian tribes, held, nominally, the supreme power, and received tribute, but they were controlled by the wisdom of the aged men, and the energetic eloquence of their young warriors, in their councils, where all important questions were discussed. "The sachems," says Roger Williams, "although they have an absolute monarchy over the people, yet they will not conclude ought that concerns all, either laws, or subsidies, or wars, unto which the people are averse, and by gentle persuasion cannot be brought."* There were also subordinate chiefs, called sagamores, who held a limited authority.

The languages and dialects of the several tribes of Indians on the continent of America have been estimated by Professors Adelung and Vater, and Baron Humboldt, the authors of that learned work, the Mithridates, at the astonishing number of *twelve hundred and fourteen.* A large proportion of these, however, appear to have been only variations of a few parent languages. The dialects spoken in New England are believed to have been varieties of the Delaware language, which prevailed among the tribes of that state, and New Jersey, and a part of New York. Roger Williams informs us, that, with his knowledge of the Narragansett tongue, he "had entered into the secrets of those countries wherever the English dwell, about two hundred miles between the French and Dutch plantations;" and he adds, that "with this help a man may converse with thou-

* Key into the Indian Language of America.

sands of natives, all over the country." The Massachusetts language, into which the the Rev. John Elliott—called the Indian apostle—translated the Bible, was radically the same as the Narragansett. Roger Williams published, in 1643, the first vocabulary of an Indian language, a work which then attracted much attention, and to which we shall have occasion to recur. This language is exceedingly regular, copious, and flexible.

With the tribes which have been mentioned, Williams had frequent intercourse, and by his intimacy with several of their chiefs, secured their confidence. His success in purchasing lands, in establishing a new colony, and subsequently preserving New England from the fury of the savages, was, under God, the result chiefly of his personal influence with the Indians. On the Rhode Island side, the two principal sachems, to whom a large number of petty chiefs were subject, were Canonicus and his nephew, Miantonomoh. Their residence was on the island of Canonicut, in the Narragansett Bay, about thirty miles south of Providence. Canonicus was an old man when Williams entered his dominions, and the cares of his government devolved chiefly on Miantonomoh, who acted as his prime minister, and probably his power was adequate, at this time, to have destroyed all the colonies of New England.

They were the owners of the soil where Williams landed, and made him a grant for his new colony. By a deed, dated the 24th of March, 1638, certain lands and meadows "lying upon the two rivers, called Mooshausick and Wanasquatucket," which he had purchased two years before, were made over to him by these sachems. They also, in "consideration of his many kindnesses and services to them and their friends, freely gave unto him all the land lying between the above-named rivers and the Pawtuxet."

Roger Williams was thus the sole negotiator with the Indians, and the legal proprietor of the lands which they ceded

to him. In this transaction he acted in accordance with his avowed principle, that the Indians were the lawful owners of all the lands which they occupied, and that no charters from popes or kings could give a right to their territory. He says, "I spared no cost towards them, in tokens and presents to Canonicus and all his, many years before I came in person to the Narragansett; and when I came I was welcome to the old prince, Canonicus, who was most shy of all English to his last breath." "It was not," he adds, "thousands, nor tens of thousands of money, could have bought of him an English entrance into this bay, but I was the procurer of the purchase by that language, acquaintance, and favor with the natives, and other advantages which it pleased God to give me." He was obliged to mortgage his house and lands in Salem in order to make additional presents and gratuities to the sachems, and, consequently to remove his wife and family immediately to the new settlement. The lands at Providence were conveyed to him alone, and, as he justly remarks, "were his as much as any man's coat upon his back." He might have been, like William Penn, the proprietary of his colony, having secured it by a patent from the rulers in England, and thus have exercised a control over its government, and amassed wealth for himself and family. But he chose to found a commonwealth, where all civil power should be exercised by the people alone, and which "might be for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience." Thirty-five years afterwards he could say, "Here, all over this colony, a great number of weak and distressed souls, scattered, are flying hither from Old and New England—the Most High and Only Wise hath, in his infinite wisdom, provided this country and this corner as a shelter for the poor and persecuted, according to their several persuasions."

The lands ceded to Williams he shortly after reconveyed as a free gift to the persons who had united with him in forming the settlement, reserving for himself an equal part only.

The town afterwards voted him thirty pounds, not as an equivalent for the land, but as a "loving gratuity." The following extract of a document written by Roger Williams, and dated Narragansett, 10th of June, 1682, may be appropriately introduced in this place as an evidence of his integrity and benevolence in his intercourse with the Indians, and of their attachment to him:—"I testify, as in the presence of the all-making and all-seeing God, that about fifty years since, I, coming into this Narragansett country, found a great contest between three sachems, two—to-wit, Canonicus and Miantonomoh—were against Ousamequin, on Plymouth side. I was forced to travel between them three, to pacify, to satisfy, all their and their dependent's spirits of my honest intentions to live peaceably by them.—I desire posterity to see he gracious hand of the Most High—in whose hands are all hearts—that when the hearts of my countrymen and friends and brethren failed me, his infinite wisdom and mercy stirred up the barbarous heart of Canonicus to love me as his son, with his last gasp, by which means I had not only Miantonomoh and all the Cowesit sachems as my friends, but Ousamequin also; who, because of my great friendship with him at Plymouth, and the authority of Canonicus, consented freely (being also well gratified by me) to my enjoyment of Providence itself, and all the other lands I procured of Canonicus, which were upon the point, and, in effect, whatsoever I desired of him; and I never denied him, or Miantonomoh, whatever they desired of me, as to goods or gifts, or use of my boats or pinnace; and the travels of my own person, day and night, which, though men know not, nor care to know, yet the all-seeing Eye hath seen it, and his all-powerful hand hath helped me. Blessed be his holy name to eternity."*

The infant community of Providence admitted others to the privileges of citizenship, and all were required to subscribe the following covenant:—

* Colony Records.

"We, whose names are hereunder written, being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves, in active or passive obedience, to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for public good of the body, *in an orderly way*, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit unto the same, *only in civil things*."

This simple instrument, which embodies the great principle for which Williams contended, it is believed, is the earliest form of government recorded which expressly recognises the rights of conscience. The unrestricted religious liberty which was the basis of the organization of the colony has characterised the state of Rhode Island to the present day. To her everlasting honor, she has always remained true to the principles of her founder—her legislature has never assumed the authority of regulating ecclesiastical concerns, or giving privileges to men of one set of religious opinions over those of another, and not a single act of religious intolerance has ever disgraced this state.

The government of Providence remained in the hands of its citizens for several years; and the legislative, judicial, and executive acts were performed by a general assembly. Two deputies were appointed to preserve order, to settle disputes, to call town meetings, to preside in them, and to see that their resolutions were executed.* Here we have an example of a commonwealth without representation, which could not exist, except in a small community.

Soon after Williams had obtained a spot where he might rest in peace, he appears to have been settled in his own habitation; for, in a letter written a short time after his landing, he says, "Miantonomoh kept his barbarous court lately at my house." Mrs. Williams and her two children, it is probable, came from Salem to Providence in the sum-

* Hist. Providence, 2 Mass. Hist. Col. ix p. 183.

mer of 1636, in company with several persons who desired to join their exiled pastor.

Williams had been obliged to leave the fields he had planted at Seekonk, and when he settled at the mouth of the Mooshausick the season was too far advanced to raise a harvest. No supplies could be derived from the towns of Massachusetts Bay, as he had been debarred all intercourse with them; and for the means of subsistence for himself and family, he must have depended principally on hunting and fishing, or upon the simple food obtained from the Indians. But he endured all is hardships with heroic and Christian fortitude, cheered with a prophetic confidence that the principles to which he so steadfastly adhered would ultimately triumph.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PEQUOD WAR—WILLIAMS PREVENTS THE INDIAN LEAGUE, AND SAVES THE COLONIES FROM DESTRUCTION — SERVICES TO MASSACHUSETTS—LETTER TO GOVERNOR WINTHROP—THE DEFEAT AND RUIN OF THE PEQUODS.

We must here narrate briefly the agency of Roger Williams, in averting the imminent danger of a general league among the Indians, for the destruction of the New England colonists. The Pequods, who, as we have already remarked, had always been treacherous and hostile to the whites, were endeavoring to unite the neighboring tribes in a war of extermination against the English. In 1634, the governor and council of Massachusetts Bay had concluded with this tribe a treaty of peace and friendship, but no treaty could restrain their hostility. In July, 1636, a short time after Williams's removal to Providence, they attacked a party of traders in a sloop, near Block Island, and murdered John Oldham, one of the company, from Massachusetts. The first intelligence of the proposed Indian league, and of the murder of Oldham, was communicated by Roger Williams in a letter to Governor Vane, at Boston. He harbored no vindictive feelings against those who had so recently expelled him from the colony, but promptly informed his persecutors of the calamities that threatened to overwhelm them.

The magistrates of Massachusetts solicited his mediation with the Narragansetts, and he immediately accepted the hazardous commission, and succeeding in defeating the en-

deavors of the Pequods to win over the Narragansetts to a coalition. In his letter to Major Mason, who was distinguished for his services in the war we are about to relate, Williams has incidentally mentioned his own agency in this undertaking, which we give in his simple and energetic language:—

"Upon letters received from the governor and council of Boston, requesting me to use my utmost and speediest endeavors to break and hinder the league labored for by the Pequods and Mohegans against the English—excusing the not sending of company and supplies by the haste of the business—the Lord helped me immediately to put my life into my hand, and scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself alone in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind, with great seas, every minute in hazard of life, to the sachem's house. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequod ambassadors, whose hands and arms, methought, reeked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut river, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also. God wondrously preserved me, and helped me to break to pieces the Pequod's negotiation and design; and to make and finish, by many travels and changes, the English league with the Narragansetts and Mohegans against the Pequods."

In consequence of the agency of Williams, Miantonomoh, the Narragansett sachem, and two sons of Canonicus, with a large number of attendants, made a visit to the authorities of Massachutetts Bay, at Boston, October, 1636. They were received with much parade and demonstration of respect, and a treaty of perpetual peace and alliance was concluded between the English and the Narragansetts, in which it was stipulated that neither party should make peace with the hostile Pequods without the consent of the other.* The

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 199. Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 61.

terms of the treaty were arranged by the negotiation of Williams, but being written in the English language, and the explanations of the magistrates being imperfect, it was found difficult to make the Indians understand the articles. "We agreed," says Governor Winthrop, "to send a copy of them to Mr. Williams, who could best interpret them." This measure was probably adopted at the request of the Indians, who knew that Williams was their friend; and it is a fact that demonstrates the confidence reposed in him, both by the Indians and by the government of Massachusetts.

Thus was Roger Williams instrumental, by the pacification he accomplished, of saving the feeble settlements of Plymouth and Massachusetts from the horrors of a universal savage war. But his agency in averting this imminent danger was but a part of the services his generous and exalted spirit performed for those who had banished him. The Pequods, though foiled in their attempts to secure the alliance of the Narragansetts, determined, single-handed, to maintain the conflict. They immediately commenced hostilities, and prosecuted the war against the English with all the ferocity of savages. They murdered several individuals at work in the fields, and the barbarous tortures inflicted upon some of them spread a chill of horror through the colonies. The alarm was increased by their attack on the fort of Saybrook, at the mouth of the Connecticut river. The colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut, resolved immediately to invade the territory of the Pequods with their united forces, and attempt the destruction of this tribe, who had meditated the entire extermination of the settlements of New England. The following letter written by Roger Williams to his friend Governor Winthrop, during the Pequod war, shows the invaluable services he rendered to the government of Massachusetts:

"Sir,—The latter end of the last week I gave notice to our neighbor princes of your intentions and preparations

against the common enemy, the Pequods. At my first coming to them, Canonicus (*morosus æque ac barbarus senex*) was very sour, and accused the English and myself for sending the plague amongst them, and threatening to kill him especially.

"Such tidings, it seems, were lately brought to his ears by some of his flatterers, and our ill-willers. I discerned cause of bestirring myself, and staid the longer, and, at last, through the mercy of the Most High, I not only sweetened his spirit, but possessed him that the plague and other sicknesses were alone in the hand of the one God, who made him and us, who, being displeased with the English for lying, stealing, idleness, and uncleanness (the natives' epidemical sins), smote many thousands of us ourselves with general and late mortalities.

"Miantonomoh kept his barbarous court lately at my house, and with him I have far better dealing. He takes some pleasure to visit me, and sent me word of his coming over again some eight days hence. They pass not a week without some skirmishes, though hitherto little loss on either side. They were glad of your preparations, and in much conference with themselves and others (fishing, *de industria*, for instructions from them), I gathered these observations, which you may please, as cause may be, to consider and take notice of.

"1. They conceive, that to do execution to purpose on the Pequods will require, not two or three days and away, but a riding by it, and following of the work, to and again, the space of three weeks or a month; that there be a falling off and a retreat, as if you were departed, and a falling on again within three or four days, when they are returned again to their houses securely from their flight.

"2. That, if any pinnaces come in ken, they presently prepare for flight, women, and old men, and children, to a swamp, some three or four miles on the back of them, a mar-

vellous great and secure swamp, which they called *Okomowauke*, which signifies owl's nest, and by another name, *Cappacommock*, which signifies a refuge or hiding-place, as I conceive.

"3. That, therefore, Niantick (which is Miantonomoh's place of rendezvous) be thought on for the riding and retiring to of vessel or vessels, which place is faithful to the Narragansetts, and at present enmity with the Pequods.

"4. They also conceive it easy for the English, that the provisions and munitions first arrive at Aquetneck, called by us Rhode Island, at the Narragansett's mouth, and then a messenger may be despatched hither, and so to the bay, for the soldiers to march up by land to the vessels, who otherwise might spend long time about the cape, and fill more vessels than needs.

"5. That the assault should be made in the night, when they are commonly more secure and at home, by which advantage, the English, being armed, may enter the houses, and do what execution they please.

"6. That before the assault be given, an ambush be laid behind them, between them and the swamp, to prevent their flight, &c.

"7. That, to that purpose, such guides as shall be best liked of, be taken along to direct, especially two Pequods, viz., Wequash and Wuttackquiackommin, valiant men, especially the latter, who have lived these three or four years with the Narragansetts, and know every pass and passage among them, who desire armor to enter their houses.

"8. That it would be pleasing to all natives that women and children be spared, &c.

"9. That if there be any more land travel to Connecticut, some course would also be taken with the Wunnashowatuckoogs, who are confederates with, and a refuge to, the Pequods.

"Sir, if anything be sent to the princes, I find that Ca-

nonicus would gladly accept of a box of eight or ten pound of sugar, and, indeed, he told me he would thank Mr. Governor for a box full.

"Sir, you may please to take notice of a rude view how the Pequods lie. [Here follows, in the original, a rude map of the Pequod and Mohegan country.]

"Thus, with my best salutes to your worthy selves and loving friends with you, and daily cries to the Father of mercies for a merciful issue to all these enterprises, I rest,

"Your worship's unfeignedly respective,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

Of the English forces engaged in this battle, Massachusetts sent one hundred and twenty men, under the command of General Stoughton, with the Rev. Mr. Wilson, of Boston, as their chaplain. The troops marched by the way of Providence, and were hospitably entertained by Williams. He accompanied the expedition to the Narragansett country, where, by his influence, he established a mutual confidence between the troops and the Indians. He then returned to Providence, and at the request of the commander, during the war, which continued nearly a year, he acted as a medium of intercourse between the army and the government of Massachusetts. This war was terminated by an attack upon Mystic fort, near a river of that name in Connecticut, made by Major Mason, in May, 1637. About five or six hundred Pequods had taken refuge in this fort, and fortified it with palisades, which offered but a feeble defence against the military tactics and the fire-arms of the English. The Pequods made a desperate resistance, but their simple weapons killed and wounded but a few of the assailants. The action lasted an hour, and terminated in the burning of the fort and the destruction of all its inmates, except a few prisoners. The forces of the colonists engaged in the battle were seventy-seven men from Connecticut and Massachusetts, and several hundred Narragansetts and other friendly Indians. The

principal force from Massachusetts, under General Stoughton, did not arrive till a few days after the action. The battle against the Pequods was fought by the whites, the friendly Indians doing little service, except to intercept the fugitives.

A short time after, a considerable number of the Pequods were killed in a battle in a great swamp, and the surviving remnant of the tribe, about two hundred, surrendered. "Of this number," says Dr. Holmes, "the English gave eighty to Miantonomoh, and twenty to Ninigret, two sachems of Narragansett, and the other hundred to Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans, to be received and treated as their men. A number of the male children were sent to Bermuda. However just the occasion of this war, humanity demands a tear on the extinction of a valiant tribe, which preferred death to what it might naturally anticipate from the progress of English settlements—dependence or extirpation."* Saccacus, the Pequod sachem, was treacherously murdered by the Mohawks, to whom he had fled for protection. Such was the terror which this victory spread through all the tribes of New England, that they refrained from open hostilities for nearly forty years.

We have seen the part which Roger Williams took in this contest, and may ascribe to his agency, and knowledge of the Indian character and language, a large share in producing its favorable issue. A solemn thanksgiving was proclaimed by the colony of Massachusetts Bay, at the close of the war, on account of the victory and of the signal deliverance experienced by their general and his troops, who had returned without the loss of a single soldier. But the magistrates passed no vote of thanks to Williams, who had been successful in frustrating the designs of the Pequods, which, as an eminent American historian observes, was, "the most intrepid and most successful achievement in the whole war; an action as perilous in its execution as it was fortunate in

* Holmes's Annals, vol. i. p. 241.

its issue."* Some of the leading men of the colony felt that he was entitled to an acknowledgement for his constant and faithful services. He himself relates, that Governor Winthrop, and "some other of the council, motioned, and it was debated, whether or no I had not merited, not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some mark of favor. It is known who hindered, who never promoted the liberty of other men's consciences."† It was not Roger Williams himself so much as his principles, that the authorities of Massachusetts could not endure, and the fear of their contagious influence overcame the sentiment of gratitude for his invaluable services. A mistaken sense of duty confirmed them in their intolerance, and the decree of banishment was never revoked. It is mournful thus to trace the influence of bigotry in extinguishing some of the finest emotions of our nature, even when it does not proceed so far as to quench every feeling of humanity in the destruction of its objects. In this milder form we may often see it displayed even at the present day.

* Bancroft's History of the United States, vol. i. p. 399.

† Letter to Major Mason. The allusion is to Governor Dudley, who was particularly opposed to toleration. At his death, some verses, written in his own hand, were found in his pocket, of which the two following lines made a part :—

"Let men of God in court and churches watch
O'er such as do a toleration hatch."

CHAPTER IX.

CONDITION OF PROVIDENCE—LAW TO PROTECT CONSCIENCE—MRS. HUTCHINSON IS BANISHED FROM MASSACHUSETTS—HER ADHERENTS ARE WELCOMED AT PROVIDENCE—SETTLEMENT ON RHODE ISLAND COMMENCED—THE AGENCY OF WILLIAMS IN ITS PURCHASE.

The settlement at Providence was rapidly increased by the arrival of persons from the other colonies, and from Europe, who fled thither to enjoy soul-liberty. So tenaciously did the little colony adhere to this principle, that they disfranchised one of their citizens for refusing to allow his wife to attend public worship as often as she wished. It deserves notice, as the earliest record in that colony of a struggle arising out of the law of liberty.

The wife of Joshua Verrin was desirous of attending the ministry of Mr. Williams. Her husband refused to permit her to do so, and the little community, considering their fundamental principle had been infringed, was immediately in great excitement. A town meeting was called on the subject, and a warm debate ensued. The following act was passed; viz.—"It was agreed that Joshua Verrin, upon breach of covenant for restraining liberty of conscience, shall be withheld from liberty of voting, till he shall declare the contrary." We cannot fail to notice the admirable adaptation of the punishment to the offence. The husband who would deprive his wife of her *religious* rights, is condemned to lose one of his own most valuable *civil* rights, until he shows

repentance. The inhabitants of Providence maintained that our duties to God are paramount to all human obligations, and that if Mrs. Verrin, after faithfully discharging her domestic claims, felt herself in conscience bound to attend Mr. Williams's meetings, it was a right which could not be surrendered. Here we have an example of the just interference of law to protect conscience.

The banishment of Roger Williams, and the voluntary exile of many of his adherents, did not secure uniformity of religious sentiment, or put an end to the unhappy divisions and contentions in Massachusetts Bay. New opinions multiplied, and spread alarm throughout the colony. At a general synod held at Cambridge, on the 30th of August, 1637, and attended by the ministers and magistrates, they denounced no less than eighty-two opinions as being erroneous. The synod spent three weeks in debate, and finished the session by condemning these errors, and pronouncing judgment on certain points of discipline.

Of these opinions, the most dreaded were those promulgated by Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, who, with her husband, came to Boston, from England, in 1636. She united a masculine spirit to a somewhat fanatical character, and possessed considerable talent. The opinions ascribed to her, by the historians of the time, related to such points as the nature of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the person of the believer, and the connection between sanctification and justification; and from her peculiar views of these doctrines consequences were deduced, which she did not admit. Mrs. Hutchinson set up a meeting of females in her own house, and a large portion of the members of the Boston church espoused her cause. Governor Vane, Rev. John Cotton, and other distinguished individuals, treated her with great respect; a sufficient proof that she was not guilty of any civil offence.

The effect of the Synod at Cambridge was to increase the

asperity of the controversy. At length the magistrates interposed, and Mrs. Hutchinson was summoned before the General Court, on a charge of *heresy;* found guilty, and sentenced to be banished from the colony. Rev. John Wheelwright, her brother-in-law, and William Aspinwall, the leading advocates of her opinions, were sharers in her banishment. The court, at the same time, proceeded to a measure still more extraordinary. Upon the pretence that the principles held by the disciples of Mrs. Hutchinson might impel them to disturb the peace of the community, nearly sixty of the citizens of Boston, and a number in other towns, were required to give up their arms and ammunition, and were forbidden, under a penalty of ten pounds, to buy or borrow any others, until permitted by the court.* An act, passed at the same session, decreed a severe punishment for all persons who should speak evil of the judges and magistrates. We have given a recital of these events, because they had an important influence upon the settlement at Providence, and illustrate the mischiefs which result from an interference by the civil magistrate in ecclesiastical affairs. If Mrs. Hutchinson had been permitted by the ministers and magistrates to continue her meetings and lectures unnoticed, it is probable her zeal would soon have moderated, and she would have laid aside her character as reformer. Their injudicious censures exalted her opinions into undue importance, and her banishment deprived the colony of a large number of citizens, and would have ruined a community less intelligent and pious.

Many of the persons who had thus been proscribed by the government of Massachusetts, departed from Boston, under the superintendence of John Clarke, a learned physician, and proceeded southward, with a design to settle on Long Island, or upon the shores of Delaware Bay. At Providence they were kindly received by Roger Williams, who advised them to form a settlement on the island of Aquet-

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 247.

neck, now called Rhode Island, which gives name to the state. This beautiful island was beyond the limits both of Plymouth and Massachusetts, and the adventurers were attracted by its rich soil and salubrious climate. Accordingly, they resolved to abandon their journey southward, and obtain a grant of the island from the sachems of Narragansetts. By the friendly and powerful influence of Roger Williams, they purchased of Canonicus and Miantonomoh, Aquetneck and other islands in the Narragansett Bay. He has left us an account of his agency in negotiating the purchase in a letter written in 1658.

"It was not price nor money that could have purchased Rhode Island. Rhode Island was obtained by love; by the love and favor which that honorable gentleman, Sir Henry Vane, and myself, had with that great sachem, Miantonomoh, about the league, which I procured between the Massachusetts English and the Narragansetts in the Pequod war. It is true I advised a gratuity to be presented to the sachem and to the natives; and because Mr. Coddington and the rest of my loving countrymen were to inhabit the place, and to be at the charge of the gratuities, I drew up a writing in Mr. Coddington's name, and in the names of such of my loving countrymen as came up with him, and put it into as sure a form as I could at that time, for the benefit and assurance of the present and future inhabitants of the island."

In another manuscript he tells us—"The Indians were very shy and jealous of selling the lands to any, and chose rather to make a grant of them to such as they effected, but, at the same time, expected such gratuities and rewards as made an Indian *gift* oftentimes a very dear bargain." "And he colony, in 1666," says Callender, "averred, that though the favor Mr. Williams had with Miantonomoh was the great means of procuring the grants of the land, yet the purchase had been dearer than of any lands in New England."* The deed of session was signed by the sachem, March 24, 1638.

* R. I. Hist. Coll. vol. iv p. 84.

The little colony soon became so populous as to send out settlers to the adjacent shores. To this pleasant and quiet retreat, Mr. Hutchinson, with his family, removed from Massachusetts. It does not appear that Mrs. Hutchinson occasioned any disturbance at Rhode Island; but, removed from the control of those who assumed the office of inquisitors into her religious opinions, she led a quiet and peaceable life. On the death of her husband, in 1642, she removed to the neighborhood of New York, where a deeply affecting tragedy occurred. The year following, she was murdered by the Indians, and all the members of her family, amounting to sixteen persons, shared the same fate, with the exception of one daughter, who was carried into captivity.

While Roger Williams was generously devoting his time and property to rescue his countrymen from destruction by the savages, and assisting in the establishment of a neighboring settlement at Rhode Island, his own colony was increasing under the benign influence of spiritual freedom. The late arbitrary measures adopted by Massachusetts Bay against Mrs. Hutchinson, and her adherents, drove from that colony a large number of its citizens, and made Providence a welcome home to some of the fugitives. It could not be expected that the persons whom the government had expelled from her jurisdiction would entertain very favorable opinions of such a proceeding. While the general court was in session, March, 1638, "there came a letter directed to the court from John Greene of Providence, who, not long before, had been imprisoned and fined for saying, that the magistrates had usurped upon the power of Christ in his Church." In consequence of this, and suspecting others to be confederate in the same letter, it was ordered, that if any one of the inhabitants of Providence should be found within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, "he should be brought before one of the magistrates; and if he would not disclaim the charge in the said letter, he should be sent home and charged to come no

more into this jurisdiction, upon pain of imprisonment and further censure."* This act operated to the very serious disadvantage of the settlers at Providence, and Williams himself complained that many thousand pounds would not repay the losses he sustained in "being debarred from Boston, the chief mart and port of New England," and from "trading with the English and natives" of Massachusetts. So great was the scarcity of paper from this cause among the settlers of Providence, that Governor Hopkins observes, "the first of their writings that are to be found appear on small scraps of paper, wrote as thick, and crowded as full as possible." But this cruel law deprived them of articles of still greater necessity, and they must have often been reduced to actual want. In referring to this period of his life, Williams says, "My time was spent day and night, at home and abroad, on the land and water, at the hoe and at the oar, for bread." No injuries to himself or his fellow-settlers, however, could provoke him to refuse his good offices on behalf of the neighboring colonies, in order to preserve harmony between them and the Indians.

In Winthrop's Journal there are repeated allusions to information received from Roger Williams, respecting the natives, and services rendered by him to Massachusetts. An event occurred about this time which deserves to be mentioned, as it exemplifies the character of Williams, and reflects honor upon the colonists in their transactions with the Indians. Four young Englishmen, who had been servants in Plymouth, and had absconded from their masters, attacked an Indian near Providence, but within the Plymouth colony. After inflicting upon him a mortal wound they fled to Providence, where they were received by Mr. Williams with his usual hospitality, for he was yet ignorant of their character and crime. After their departure he was informed of the atrocious act they had perpetrated, and immediately des-

* Winthrop, vol. i. p. 256.

patched messengers for their apprehension. He then set out himself, with two or three other persons, in search of the wounded Indian. They conveyed him to Providence, but all efforts to preserve his life were unavailing. The murderers were soon arrested and brought to Providence; and, by the advice of Governor Winthrop, they were sent to Plymouth, within whose jurisdiction the murder had been committed. One of the prisoners made his escape; but the remaining three were tried for murder, confessed the crime, and were executed in the presence of Mr. Williams and the Indians. This vindication of law and the rights of the natives secured their confidence.

Winthrop relates another circumstance that evinces the implicit confidence the Indians reposed in Roger Williams. Rumors were circulated that the Indians were plotting new mischief against the colonists. The government of Massachusetts strengthened the defences of the towns, and sent an officer, with three men and an interpreter, to the Narragansetts to ascertain the truth of the rumors, and to invite their sachem to Boston. Miantonomoh denied any hostile intentions, and expressed his readiness to visit Boston, provided Mr. Williams might accompany him as his adviser. But the authorities of Massachusetts would not relax the sentence of banishment, even for the advantage of a personal interview with the sachem, and in a matter so important to the peace and welfare of the colony.

In 1640, the tranquility of Providence was disturbed by disputes respecting the boundaries of lands; and a committee was appointed authorized to terminate these dissensions by arbitration. The report of this committee is highly characteristic of the community. One of its prominent articles is in these words:—"We agree, as formerly hath been the liberties of the town, so still *to hold forth liberty of conscience.*" From the social feuds which had arisen, it became evident to the sagacious mind of Williams that a more energetic gov-

ernment was necessary, and the citizens of Providence established a form of civil polity which they deemed most suitable to promote peace and order in their present circumstances.

The government on Rhode Island was also more regularly organized the same year, and the acts passed show that the settlements there and at Providence were founded on the same principles. On the 16th of March, 1641, it was ordered, by the authority of the general court, "that none be accounted a delinquent for DOCTRINE, provided it be not directly repugnant to the government or laws established." And in September following, they passed a special act, "that that law concerning liberty of conscience in point of doctrine be perpetuated."

CHAPTER X.

LEAGUE OF THE NEW ENGLAND COLONIES—THE SETTLEMENTS IN RHODE ISLAND EXCLUDED—WILLIAMS'S FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND—PUBLISHES HIS KEY TO THE INDIAN LANGUAGES—OBTAINS A CHARTER—HIS LETTER TO COTTON—"THE BLOUDY TENENT"—HE RETURNS TO AMERICA—HIS RECEPTION AT BOSTON AND PROVIDENCE.

In the year 1642, the colonists of New England were alarmed by reports of hostile designs on the part of the Indians, and they accordingly adopted vigorous measures of defence. The natives were becoming more formidable by their acquisition of fire-arms and ammunition, from the English and Dutch traders.

The following year is memorable in the history of New England, by the establishment of the earliest confederacy of the colonies. The articles of union were signed at Boston, on the 19th of May, 1643, by the commissioners of the four colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut and New Haven, under the name of "the United Colonies of New England."

The objects of the confederation were, mutual protection against the depredations committed by the natives, together with the enjoyment of "the liberty of the gospel, in purity with peace, and the advancement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ." By the articles, it was stipulated, that two commissioners should be annually chosen by each colony, to meet successively at Boston, Hartford, New Haven, and Plymouth,

once a year, or oftener if necessary, and that this congress should determine questions of peace or war, and consult for the general welfare. This league had a beneficial effect, and was continued till the year 1686.

The colony at Providence was not invited to join this confederacy, and her subsequent application for admission, like that of the neighboring colony on Rhode Island, was refused. The want of a charter was at first the reason alleged, but when this objection was removed there was no disposition to admit her to the privileges of the league. The entire separation of the ecclesiastical from the civil power, which formed the basis of her legislation, was undoubtedly the principal cause of her exclusion. Providence was thus exposed to many inconveniences and dangers, and left without defence, except by her own citizens. But the powerful influence of Roger Williams with the Indians preserved the colony, amidst the perils to which the confederate colonies had abandoned her.

The authorities of Massachusetts, not satisfied with having driven Williams and others from their territory, by their oppressive measures against conscience, laid claim to jurisdiction over the settlements in Narragansett Bay. The increasing prosperity of the colonies at Providence and on Rhode Island, their exclusion from the confederacy, and the declarations of their enemies that they had no legal authority for civil government, led the inhabitants to feel the great importance of obtaining a charter from the mother country. At an assembly in Newport, September 19, 1642, a committee was appointed, with instructions to procure a charter, who entrusted the agency to Roger Williams. He agreed, on behalf of that colony and his own, to visit England, and, if possible, obtain a charter defining their rights, and giving them independent authority, free from the vexatious interference of the other colonies.

He proceeded to New York to embark for England—for

he was not permitted to enter the territories of Massachusetts, and sail from the more convenient port of Boston. At Manhattoes, while waiting for the ship to go to sea, he had an opportunity of exerting his influence to preserve that colony from the merciless attacks of the Indians. The savages of Long Island, provoked by the wanton cruelties of the Dutch, had assailed them with great fury. They had burned many houses in the neighborhood of Manhattoes; murdered several persons, among whom were Mrs. Hutchinson and her family; and assaulted the dwelling of Lady Moody, who had lately removed thither from Massachusetts. It was by the immediate interposition of Williams that peace was restored between the inhabitants of the Dutch settlements and their barbarous foes. In June, 1643, Williams embarked at New York for his native land, but he has left no account of the incidents of the voyage. He has, however, recorded one fact which evinces the activity of his mind on the ocean as well as on the land, and exemplifies the sentiment so beautifully expressed in one of his works—"One grain of time's inestimable sand is worth a golden mountain." He informs us that he employed his leisure, during the voyage, in preparing a "KEY TO THE INDIAN LANGUAGES." "I drew the materials," he says, "in a rude lump, at sea, as a private help to my own memory; that I might not, by my present absence, lightly lose what I had so dearly bought in some few years' hardship and changes among the barbarians."* This book was published soon after his arrival in England, and was the first work ever written on the language and manners of the American Indians.† The work evinces much industry and acuteness in collecting the words and phrases of an unwritten language, and contains valuable information

* Key, p. 17.

† It is entitled, "A Key into the Language of America; or, a Help to the Language of the Natives, in that part of America called New England; together with brief Observations of the Customs, Manners, Worship, &c. By Roger Williams, of Providence, in New England. London, 1643."

concerning the various topics of which it treats. It is dedicated to his "well-beloved friends and countrymen in Old and New England." In this dedication he says, "This Key respects the native language of it, and happily may unlock some rarities concerning the natives themselves, not yet discovered. A little key may open a box where lies a bunch of keys." He shows his benevolent zeal for the welfare of the natives, and professes his hope that his book may contribute to the spread of Christianity among them, "being comfortably persuaded that that Father of spirits who was graciously pleased to persuade Japheth (the Gentile) to dwell in the tents of Shem (the Jews), will, in his holy season (I hope approaching), persuade these Gentiles of America to partake of the mercies of Europe; and then shall be fulfilled what is written by the prophet Malachi, 'from the rising of the sun (in Europe) to the going down of the same (in America) my name shall be great among the Gentiles.'"

The Key comprises one hundred and ninety-seven pages of small duodecimo, and is divided into thirty-two chapters, the titles of which are—Of Salutation; of Eating and Entertainment; of Sleep; of their Numbers; of Relations and Consanguinity; of their Religion; of their Government; &c. Each chapter closes with pious reflections. As this work is now exceedingly rare in this country,* we present an extract—which will interest the curious reader—from the twenty-first chapter, "Of Religion, the Soul, &c."

"*Manit, Mannittowock,* God, Gods.

"*Obs.*—He that questions whether God made the world, the Indians will teach him. I must acknowledge I have received, in my converse with them, many confirmations of those two great points, Heb. xi. 6; viz.—

"1. That God is.

* Only five or six copies of the original edition are known to exist. It was published entire in vol. i. of the Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, 1827.

"That he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him.

"They will generally confess that God made all; but then, in special, although they deny not that Englishman's God made Englishmen, and the heavens and earth there, yet their gods made them, and the heavens and earth where they dwell.

"*Nummus quauna—muckqun manit.* God is angry with me.

"If they receive any good in hunting, fishing, harvest, &c., they acknowledge God in it.

"Yea, if it be but an ordinary accident, a fall, &c., they will say, God was angry, and did it.

"*Musquantum manit.* God is angry.

"But herein is their misery:—

"First. They branch their godhead into many gods.

"Secondly. Attribute it to creatures.

"First. Many gods: they have given me the names of thirty-seven, which I have, all which, in their solemn worship, they invocate; as,

"*Kautantowit.* The great south-west god, to whose house all souls go, and from whom came their corn and beans, as they say.

"*Wompanand.* The eastern god.

"*Chekesuwand.* The western god.

"*Wunnanameanit.* The northern god.

"*Sowwanand.* The southern god.

"*Wetuomanit.* The house god.

"*Squauanit.* The woman's god.

"*Muckquachuckquand.* The children's god.

"Secondly. As they have many of these feigned deities, so worship they the creatures in whom they conceive doth rest some deity:

"*Keesuckquand.* The sun god.

"*Nanepaushat.* The moon god.

"*Poumpagussit.* The sea god.

"*Yotaanit.* The fire god.

"Supposing that deities be in these," &c.

The work breathes throughout a spirit of piety, and closes with the following devout aspirations :—

"Now, to the most high and most holy, immortal, invisible, and only wise God, who alone is alpha and omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, who was, and is, and is to come; from whom, by whom, and to whom, are all things; by whose gracious assistance and wonderful supportment, in so many varieties of hardship and outward miseries, I have had such converse with barbarous nations, and have been mercifully assisted, to frame this poor Key, which may, through his blessing, in his own holy season, open a door—yea, doors of unknown mercies to us and them, be honor, glory, power, riches, wisdom, goodness, and dominion, ascribed by all his in Jesus Christ to eternity. Amen."

Roger Williams arrived in England when the nation was convulsed by the civil war, and but a few months after the death of the illustrious Hampden. Charles had already fled from London, and parliament were in possession of the executive and legislative authority. This state of affairs was, in some respects, favorable to the successful accomplishment of the mission of Williams. The issue of the conflict between the king and the parliament was then very doubtful, and the latter were disposed to strengthen themselves by conciliating the colonies in America. In March, 1643, the House of Commons passed a resolution in favor of New England, exempting its imports and exports from customs, subsidy or taxation. By an ordinance, November 3rd, 1643, a short time after the arrival of Williams, parliament appointed the earl of Warwick governor-in-chief and lord high admiral of the American colonies, with a council of five peers and twelve commoners. It empowered him, together

with his associates, to examine the state of their affairs, to send for papers and persons, to remove governors and officers, and appoint others in their places, and to assign to these such part of the power granted as he should think proper.* From these commissioners, Roger Williams, aided by the influence of his early friend, Sir Henry Vane, one of their number, easily obtained a charter for the colony of Rhode Island. It was dated March 17, 1644, and granted to the inhabitants of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth, and Newport, "a free and absolute charter of civil incorporation," to be entitled, *The incorporation of Providence plantations, in the Narragansett Bay in New England.* The instrument conveyed to the inhabitants of these towns the most ample powers to adopt such a form of civil government, and "to make and ordain such civil laws and constitutions, as they, or the greatest part of them, shall by free consent agree unto, provided, nevertheless, that the said laws for the plantation be conformable to the laws of England, so far as the nature and constitution of that place will admit."

While in England, Williams published a small quarto volume, entitled, "Mr. Cotton's Letter, lately printed, Examined and Answered. By Roger Williams, of Providence, in New England. London, imprinted in the year 1644." It is preceded by an address to "the impartial reader," from which it appears, that, soon after Williams's banishment, in the time of his "distressed wanderings amongst the barbarians," Mr. Cotton sent him a letter in which he justifies that persecuting act of the magistrates in banishing him, but denies that he had any agency in the matter. Williams, in this work, states the causes, which led to his banishment, shows "the sandiness of the grounds" on which they rested, the "rocky strength" of his own opinions, and concludes by desiring "Mr. Cotton and every soul to whom these lines may come, seriously to consider in this controversy, if the

* Holmes's Annals, vol. i. p. 273.

Lord Jesus were himself in person in Old or New England, what church, what ministry, what worship, what government, he would set up, and what persecution he would practise toward them that would not receive him." Its tone is courteous, and he speaks of his great antagonist, the Rev. John Cotton, as a man "whom for his personal excellences I truly honor and love." Mr. Cotton had been a minister of Boston, in England, and the city of Boston, in Massachusetts, was named after his former place of residence, as a compliment to this eminent man. He was unquestionably a very talented preacher, and if he had lived at a period when the rights of conscience were better understood, his powerful pen, we doubt not, would have been differently employed. During Williams's residence in England, he also published an anonymous pamphlet, entitled, "Queries of Highest Consideration proposed to Mr. Thomas Goodwin—presented to the High Court of Parliament, London, 1644."* It is a quarto of thirteen pages, and contains clear and accurate observations on the distinct provinces of civil and ecclesiastical authority.

Notwithstanding the engrossing nature of his mission in obtaining the charter for Rhode Island, and the great national conflict, in which he must have felt the deepest interest, Williams found leisure to prepare for the press his celebrated book entitled, "The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience, discussed in a Conference between Truth and Peace; who, in all tender affection, present to the High Court of Parliament (as the result of their discourse) these, amongst other, passages of highest consideration. London. Printed in the year 1644." The origin of this work illustrates the spirit of the age. A person, who was confined in Newgate on account of his religious opinions, wrote a treatise against persecution for cause of conscience. Being deprived of the use of ink, it was written with milk,

* Orme's Life of Owen, p. 100. Cotton's Answer, p. 2.

on sheets of paper sent by a friend, as stoppers to the bottle containing his daily allowance of milk. After its publication, the essay was sent about the year 1635, to the Rev. John Cotton, of Boston, who wrote a reply, of which Williams's book is an examination. Its title, "The Bloudy Tenent," is chosen to exhibit, in strong contrast, the different character of the two essays—the one, toleration, written with *milk*: and, the other, persecution, steeped in *blood*.

The book comprises two hundred and forty-seven pages of small quarto, and is printed without the name of the author or publisher. It is dedicated "to the Right Honorable both Houses of the High Court of Parliament;" and it appears to have attracted the attention of some of the leading men in England. After an address "to every courteous reader," the treatise of the prisoner, and Mr. Cotton's reply, are inserted; then follows the main work, which is in the form of a dialogue between Truth and Peace. It was prepared for publication, as the author himself observes, "in change of rooms and corners, yea, sometimes in variety of strange houses; sometimes in the fields, in the midst of travel;" yet it is the best of his works, and contains a full exhibition of his doctrines of religious freedom, supported by luminous and powerful reasoning. His style is generally animated, and often highly beautiful.

The colloquy between Truth and Peace commences thus:—

"*Truth.*—In what dark corner of the world, sweet Peace, are we two met? How hath this present evil world banished me from all the coasts and quarters of it? and how hath the righteous God in judgment taken thee from the earth? Rev. vi. 4.

"*Peace.*—'Tis lamentably true, blessed Truth, the foundations of the world have long been out of course. The gates of earth and hell have conspired together to intercept our joyful meeting and our holy kisses. With what a weary, tired wing have I flown over nations, kingdoms, cities, towns, to find out precious Truth.

"*Truth.*—The like inquiries in my flights and travels have I made for Peace, and still am told, she hath left the earth and fled to heaven.

"*Peace.*—Dear Truth, what is the earth but a dungeon of darkness, where Truth is not?"

A complete analysis of this work would occupy too much space, but a syllabus is presented in the author's own words:—

"The blood of so many hundred thousand souls, of protestants and papists, spilt in the wars of present and former ages, for their respective consciences, is not required nor accepted by Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.—Pregnant scriptures and arguments are, throughout the work, proposed against the doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience.—Satisfactory answers are given to scriptures and objections produced by Mr. Calvin, Beza, Mr. Cotton, and the ministers of the New English Churches, and others, former and latter, tending to prove the doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience.—The doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience is proved guilty of all the blood of the souls crying for vengeance under the altar.—All civil states, with their officers of justice, in their respective constitutions and administrations, are proved essentially civil, and, therefore, not judges, governors, or defenders of the spiritual or christian state and worship.—It is the will and command of God that, since the coming of his Son the Lord Jesus, a permission of the most paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or anti-christian consciences and worships be granted to all men in all nations and countries; and they are only to be fought against with that sword which is only in soul matters able to conquer; to wit, the sword of God's Spirit, the Word of God.—The state of the land of Israel, the kings and people thereof, in peace and war, is proved, figurative and ceremonial, and no pattern or precedent for any kingdom or civil state in the world to follow.—God requireth not an uni-

formity of religion to be enacted and enforced in any civil state; which enforced uniformity, sooner or later, is the greatest occasion of civil war, ravishing of conscience, persecution of Jesus Christ in his servants, and of the hypocrisy and destruction of millions of souls.—In holding an enforced uniformity of religion in a civil state, we must necessarily disclaim our desires and hopes of the Jews' conversion to Christ.—An enforced uniformity of religion throughout a nation or civil state, confounds the civil and religious, denies the principles of christianity and civility, and that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.—The permission of other consciences and worships than a state professeth, only can, according to God, procure a firm and lasting peace; good assurance being taken, according to the wisdom of the civil state, for uniformity of civil obedience from all sorts.—True civility and christianity may both flourish in a state or kingdom, notwithstanding the permission of divers and contrary consciences, either of Jew or Gentile."

The grand doctrine for which he contends is, that as God is the Supreme Ruler, the obligation to love and obey him binds the conscience of every man; but he is responsible to God alone. His fellow-men, therefore, have no right to interfere with his religious opinions, for God has not delegated to any man this authority over the conscience; consequently, all human laws which either prescribe or prohibit doctrines or rites that are not inconsistent with the civil peace, are an invasion of God's prerogative, and no man is bound to obey them.

Principles of religious liberty are expounded and illustrated in the "Bloudy Tenent," which have since excited admiration in the writings of Jeremy Taylor, Milton, Locke, and Furneau. Bishop Heber, in his life of Jeremy Taylor, remarks, of the "Liberty of Prophecying:"—"It is the first attempt on record to conciliate the minds of Christians to the reception of a doctrine, which, though now the rule of

action professed by all christian sects, was then, by every sect alike, regarded as a perilous and portentous novelty." Bishop Heber has here fallen into a mistake, as Taylor's admirable work was not published till 1647, three years after the "Bloudy Tenent." In the latter work the principles of liberty of conscience are far more clearly and consistently maintained. Taylor *claims toleration for those Christians only who unite in the confession of the Apostle's creed;* Williams claims not merely a right to *toleration*, but *for every man entire liberty of conscience.*

Roger Williams, having accomplished the object of his mission to England, embarked for America, and landed at Boston, September 17th, 1644. He brought with him the following letter, signed by several noblemen, and other members of parliament, and addressed "To the right worshipful the governor and assistants, and the rest of our worthy friends in the plantation of Massachusetts Bay, in New England:"—

"Our much-honored Friends,—Taking notice, some of us of long time, of Mr. Roger Williams, his good affections and conscience, and of his sufferings by our common enemies and oppressors of God's people, the prelates; as, also, of his great industry and travail in his printed Indian labors in your parts (the like whereof we have not seen extant from any part of America), and in which respect it hath pleased both houses of parliament to grant unto him, and friends with him, a free and absolute charter of civil government for those parts of his abode; and, withal, sorrowfully resenting—that amongst good men (our friends) driven to the ends of the world, exercised with the trials of a wilderness, and who mutually give good testimony, each of the other (as we observe you do of him, and he abundantly of you),—there should be such a distance; we thought it fit, upon divers considerations, to profess our great desires of both your utmost endeavors of nearer closing and of readily

expressing those good affections (which we perceive you bear to each other), in effectual performance of all friendly offices. The rather because of those bad neighbors you are likely to find in Virginia, and the unfriendly visits from the west of England and of Ireland. That however it may please the Most High to shake our foundations, yet the report of your peaceable and prosperous plantations may be some refreshings to your true and faithful friends."

This letter was delivered to the authorities of Massachusetts, and procured for Williams permission to proceed unmolested to Providence, but it failed to soften their temper towards him, or the heretical colony. The magistrates, says Hubbard, upon the receipt of the letter, examined their hearts, but saw no reason to condemn themselves for any former proceedings against Mr. Williams. The colony being now invested with the dignity of an independent government, and under the protection of the parent country, appeared to the united colonies to possess a greater power for mischief, and they steadily pursued towards her an unfriendly policy.

The news of Williams's arrival at Boston had preceded him and the inhabitants of Providence met him at Seekonk, with a fleet of canoes to welcome his return, and to convey him home in triumph. These humble colonists could not receive their constant friend and benefactor with the pomp of regal display, but they offered him the more valuable homage of heart-felt gratitude. Such an expression of it is honorable to our common humanity, and is a reward seldom withheld from those who, like Roger Williams, seek with disinterested patriotism the welfare of their country. This reception is a sufficient testimony of the esteem in which his character and services were held by his fellow-citizens.

CHAPTER XI.

WILLIAMS'S EFFORTS IN PREVENTING A GENERAL INDIAN WAR—FORM OF GOVEMNMENT UNDER THE CHARTER—SPIRIT OF THE LAWS—DISSENSIONS—WILLIAMS'S LETTER TO THE TOWN OF PROVIDENCE—CODDINGTON'S COMMISSION—OPPRESSIVE POLICY OF THE OTHER NEW ENGLAND COLONIES—PERSECUTION OF JOHN CLARKE, AND OTHERS, IN MASSACHUSETTS—LETTER OF SIR RICHARD SALTONSTALL—WILLIAMS AND CLARKE ARE APPOINTED AGENTS TO THE MOTHER COUNTRY.

Immediately after his return, Roger Williams endeavored to carry into operation the charter he had procured, but the inhabitants were not prepared at once to agree on a form of government. The charter gave them power to frame their own laws, but much skill and delicacy were necessary to harmonize the various conflicting interests of the respective towns.

In the meantime, the beneficent services of Williams were required in settling the difficulties which had sprung up, during his absence, between the united colonies and the Narragansetts. The latter, exasperated against the Mohegans, who had put to death their favorite sachem, Miantonomoh, and against the colonists, who had sanctioned the deed, resolved on war. They soon commenced hostilities, killed several of the Mohegans, and threatened to extend the war to all the colonists of New England, except those at Providence, and on Rhode Island, having, from regard to Williams, agreed to

maintain peace with these settlements. An extraordinary meeting of the commissioners was held in Boston, when they received a letter from Roger Williams, informing them of the hostile determinations of the Narragansetts. Two messengers were sent to the sachems of the tribe to appease their vengeance and prevent the war. Williams had already been sent for by the sachems to advise them in this crisis; and on the arrival of the messengers he served them as an interpreter. By his mediation, Passacus, the brother and successor of Miantonomoh, and other chiefs of the tribe, were persuaded to go to Boston, where a treaty was concluded in August, 1645, between the commissioners and the sachems, by which the latter agreed to make peace with the Mohegans. Thus were the settlements of New England saved, a second time, from a general Indian war, mainly by the good offices and personal influence of Roger Williams.

The several towns of the Providence plantations at length agreed on a form of civil government, closely analogous to the organization of the United States, under their present constitution. It was adopted in a general assembly of the people of the colony, held at Portsmouth, May 19th, 1647. This form required the annual election of a president and four assistants, in whom the executive power was vested, and who constituted the general court of trial for all cases of appeal. The legislative assembly was composed of six commissioners from each town, who should make laws and order the general affairs of the colony. The laws adopted by the above-mentioned general assembly were mainly taken from those of England. This excellent code concludes with these memorable words:—"These are the laws that concern all men, and these are the penalties for the transgressions thereof, which, by common consent, are ratified and established throughout the whole colony. And otherwise than thus, what is herein forbidden, all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God.

AND LET THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH WALK IN THIS COLONY WITHOUT MOLESTATION, IN THE NAME OF JEHOVAH THEIR GOD, FOR EVER AND EVER."*

An eminent American historian justly observes, "The annals of Rhode Island, if written in the spirit of philosophy, would exhibit the forms of society under a peculiar aspect. Had the territory of the state corresponded to the importance and singularity of the principles of its early existence, the world would have been filled with wonder at the phenomena of its early history."† Williams had a large share in the organization of the new government, and he was justly entitled, from his character and services, to be the first president. It was, undoubtedly, to conciliate the other towns that he cheerfully yielded his own claims to that office, while he accepted the subordinate place of assistant for the town of Providence. Among the acts passed at this first meeting of the general assembly, was a resolution gratefully recognising the services of Roger Williams in obtaining the charter, and "in regard to his so great trouble, charges, and good endeavors," granting him the sum of one hundred pounds. This was, undoubtedly, a very inadequate compensation, but the whole even of this sum was never paid, owing, perhaps, to the unhappy jealousies which arose between the different settlements; or, it may be, Williams was too generous to press his just claims. It must be confessed, however, that gratitude has not been a conspicuous virtue of any government, republican, or monarchical. Individual conscience seems to be dissipated when men act together in large communities.

It could not be expected that the several towns of the colony, composed of so many discordant materials, embracing all sorts of opinions, would quietly coalesce in one form of government. The harmony of Providence was early dis-

* Colony Records. † Bancroft, vol. i. p. 380.

turbed, by the resort of many restless spirits from the other colonies, who entertained mistaken views of religious freedom. The influence of Williams was often needed as a peace-maker, to throw oil upon the troubled waters.

One of the principal sources of disquietude to Williams at this time, and of injury to the colony, was the extraordinary proceedings of William Coddington, the leading inhabitant of the settlement on Rhode Island. The fierce conflict then raging at home affected this distant dependency. Coddington was attached to the king's party, and disposed to promote his authority in the colony. From the first organization of the government, under the charter, his efforts were directed to its overthrow. Having persuaded a faction to unite with him, he first attempted to obtain admission for the island settlements into the league of the New England colonies, but, happily, this effort failed.

In this state of affairs Williams addressed a letter to the town of Providence, dated August, 1648, which places his character as a peacemaker in a very interesting light:—

"Worthy friends, that ourselves and all men are apt and prone to differ, is no new thing. In all former ages, in all parts of the world, in these parts, and in our dear native country and mournful state of England, that either part or party is most right in his own eyes, his cause right, his carriage right, his arguments right, his answers right, is as woefully and constantly true, as the former. And experience tells us, that when the God of peace hath taken peace from the earth, one spark of action, word or carriage, is powerful to kindle such a fire as burns up towns, cities, armies, navies, nations and kingdoms. And since, dear friends, it is an honor for men to cease from strife; since the life of love is sweet, and union is as strong as sweet; and since you have been lately pleased to call me to some public service, and my soul hath been long musing how I might bring water to quench, and not oil or fuel to the flame; I am now humbly

bold to beseech you, by all those comforts of earth and heaven, which a placable and peaceable spirit will bring to you, and by all those dreadful alarms and warnings, either amongst ourselves, in deaths and sicknesses, or abroad in the raging calamities of the sword, death, and pestilence; I say, humbly and earnestly beseech you, to be willing to be pacifiable, willing to be reconcilable, willing to be sociable, and to listen to the (I hope not unreasonable) motion following: To try out matters by disputes and writings, is sometimes endless; to try out arguments by arms and swords, is cruel and merciless; to trouble the state and lords of England, is most unreasonable, most chargeable; to trouble our neighbors of other colonies, seems neither safe nor honorable. Methinks, dear friends, the colony now looks with the torn face of two parties, and that the greater number of Portsmouth, with other loving friends adhering to them, appear as one grieved party; the other three towns, or greater part of them, appear to be another. Let each party choose and nominate three; Portsmouth and friends adhering, three, the other party, three, one out of each town; let authority be given to them to examine every public difference, grievance and obstruction of justice, peace and common safety; let them, by one final sentence of all or the greater part of them, end all, and set the whole into an unanimous posture and order, and let them set a censure upon any that shall oppose their sentence."

This excellent advice, however, could not be followed, for Coddington persisted in his ambitious views. He went to England, and procured from the council of state a commission, constituting him governor for life of the islands of Rhode Island and Canonicut. He returned in 1651, bringing his new charter, whose operation would at once subvert the existing government and divide the colony. This produced great excitement throughout the different settlements, and alarmed those inhabitants on the islands who were opposed to his measures.

In addition to these internal dissensions, other troubles arose. The colony was surrounded by Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut, which were all opposed to the little heretical state, and regarded her as their legitimate prey. Plymouth was desirous of adding the beautiful island to her territory; Connecticut repeatedly asserted her claims to the Narragansett country; and Massachusetts claimed Providence and the neighboring settlement of Warwick.

The special aversion which Massachusetts felt towards intruders from Rhode Island is illustrated in the memorable transactions in which the Rev. John Clarke, Mr. Obadiah Holmes, and Mr. John Crandall, three citizens of Newport, had so melancholy a share. They were appointed by the church in Newport to visit one William Witter, an aged member of that church, then resident at Lynn, a few miles east of Boston, who had requested a visit for the purpose of christian intercourse. The committee proceeded, in a peaceable manner, on this benevolent mission to Lynn. The next day being the Sabbath, it was thought proper to spend it in worship at the house of Witter. While Mr. Clarke was preaching from Rev. iii. 10, relating to temptation, he was suddenly interrupted by two constables, who arrested him and his companions by virtue of the following warrant signed by one of the magistrates; viz.—"By virtue hereof, you are required to go to the house of William Witter, and so to search from house to house for certain erroneous persons, being strangers, and them to apprehend, and in safe custody to keep, and to morrow morning, at eight o'clock to bring before me." Mr. Clarke and his companions were detained, through the Sabbath, in the custody of the officers, and the next day were committed to prison in Boston. On being brought before the court for trial, Mr. Clarke defended himself and his companions so ably that the magistrates were not a little embarrassed. "At length, however," says Mr. Clarke, "the governor stepped up, and told us we had denied infant

baptism, and, being somewhat transported, told me I had deserved death, and said he would not have such trash brought into his jurisdiction."

The trial resulted in the conviction of the prisoners, and Mr. Clarke was sentenced to pay a fine of twenty pounds, Mr. Holmes of thirty pounds, and Mr. Crandall, of five pounds; or, in case of their refusal of payment, to be whipped. They refused to pay the fines, as they acknowledged neither the justice of the sentence, nor the jurisdiction of the magistrates. They were accordingly committed to prison, from which, after a few weeks, Messrs. Clarke and Crandall were released, by the interposition of their friends, and permitted to return to Newport. Mr. Holmes was confined longer, and before he was discharged, thirty lashes were inflicted on him with merciless severity. Two other persons, also, who were present at his punishment, and expressed sympathy with the sufferers, were fined and imprisoned.*

To record facts like these of the Pilgrim Fathers is inexpressibly painful. It tends, however, to deepen our abhorrence of the principle which could pervert the judgment and harden the heart of men so justly eminent for their piety. If they had abandoned to their persecutors in the fatherland the policy of state interference with religious opinions, no shade would now rest upon their otherwise glorious memories.

It is refreshing, however, to turn to a brighter page, evincing that these persecutions were not unanimously approved. Sir Richard Saltonstall, one of the magistrates of Massachusetts Bay, then in England, wrote thus to the Rev. Messrs. Cotton and Wilson, of Boston:—

"Reverend and dear friends, whom I unfeignedly love and respect,—It doth not a little grieve my spirit to hear what sad things are reported daily of your tyranny and persecution in New England, as that you fine, whip, and im-

* Backus's History of New England, vol. i. p. 207.

prison men for their consciences. First you compel such to come into your assemblies as you know will not join you in your worship, and when they show their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you stir up your magistrates to punish them for such—as you conceive—their public affronts. Truly, friends, this your practice of compelling any in matters of worship to do that whereof they are not fully persuaded, is to make them sin, for so the apostle (Rom. xiv. 23) tells us, and many are made hypocrites thereby, conforming in their outward man, for fear of punishment. We pray for you, and wish you prosperity every way, hoping the Lord would have given you so much light and love there, that you might have been eyes to God's people here, and not to practice those courses in a wilderness, which you went so far to prevent. These rigid ways have laid you very low in the hearts of the saints."

In this distressed state of the colony, while the citizens were at variance with each other, and were subjected to such tyrannical acts from their powerful and ambitious neighbor, Massachusetts, it was apparent that the only safety was in a union of all the towns. The Indians, also, began to commit depredations, and offer insults which the individual settlements were too feeble to punish, and which the commissioners of the united colonies refused to redress.

In this crisis, nearly all the inhabitants of Newport, and a large number of those of Portsmouth, requested John Clarke to proceed to England, as their agent to procure the repeal of Coddington's commission, and the confirmation of the charter obtained by Williams. The appointment of Mr. Clarke to this mission was, in every respect, most judicious. He was a gentleman of liberal education, courteous manners, and the original projector of the settlement on the island. He was held in high estimation as a physician, and a minister of the church at Newport, and, in every emergency, had proved himself able in counsel, wise in deliberation, and en-

ergetic in action. After his return, he was elected three years successively deputy-governor.

The towns of Providence and Warwick, which continued to maintain the government under the original charter, urgently importuned Williams to accompany Clarke, and cooperate with him to accomplish this important object. He at first absolutely declined accepting this important trust, from reluctance again to leave his large family, and from inability to sustain the expense. His warm interest in the colony he had founded, and the importunities of the citizens, at length induced him to accept the appointment, and he prepared again to cross the Atlantic. Some efforts were made by the inhabitants of Providence and Warwick to obtain a sufficient sum for defraying the expenses of the mission, but they do not appear to have been effectual. To obtain the means of making the voyage, and supporting his family during his absence, he says, that "he sold his trading house at Narragansett, with one hundred pounds profit per annum;" a new proof, if any were needed, of his self-sacrificing patriotism.

CHAPTER XII.

WILLIAMS AND CLARKE SAIL FOR ENGLAND—CODDINGTON'S COMMISSION REVOKED, AND THE FORMER CHARTER CONFIRMED—LETTER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO WILLIAMS—PUBLISHES HIS EXPERIMENTS OF SPIRITUAL LIFE AND HEALTH AND THEIR PRESERVATIVES—THE HIRELING MINISTRY—REJOINDER TO COTTON—CORRESPONDENCE.

HAVING made the necessary arrangements preparatory to his long absence from home, Williams joined his friend Clarke at Boston, where they embarked together in November, 1651. It was not without considerable difficulty that Williams was allowed to pass through the territory of Massachusetts, for the purpose of taking ship for England. He alludes to the fact, in his subsequent letters, though he does not mention the nature of the molestation he suffered from the authorities. The objects of his embassy were offensive to them, besides their hatred of his principles.

Great events had occurred in the mother country since Williams last visited her shores. Monarchy had been subverted, and the supreme authority was vested in a council of state. On their arrival in England, Williams and Clarke presented a petition to the council, in behalf of the colony they had come to represent, who referred it to the committee for foreign affairs. The application met with opposition from various quarters; but an order was at length passed by

the council annulling Coddington's commission, and confirming the former charter. This important measure Williams ascribes mainly to the efforts of his friend Sir Henry Vane, a man of kindred spirit, and a prominent member of the council.

During the absence of Williams, the general assembly, which met at Providence, addressed a letter to him which is valuable, as a public testimonial of the esteem of his fellow citizens. The following is an extract:—

"Honored Sir,—We may not neglect any opportunity to salute you in this your absence, and have not a little cause to bless God, who hath pleased to select you to such a purpose, as we doubt not will conduce to the peace and safety of us all, as to make you once more an instrument to impart and disclose our cause unto those noble and grave senators, our honorable protectors, in whose eyes God hath given you honor—as we understand—beyond our hopes, and moved the hearts of the wise to stir on your behalf. We give you hearty thanks for your care and diligence to watch all opportunities to promote our peace, for we perceive your prudent and comprehensive mind stirreth every stone to present it to the builders, to make firm the fabric unto us, about which you are employed. . . .

"Sir, give us leave to intimate thus much, that we humbly conceive—so far as we are able to understand—that, if it be the pleasure of our protectors to renew our charter for the re-establishing of our government, that it might tend much to the weighing of men's minds, and subjection of persons who have been refractory, to yield themselves over as unto a settled government, if it might be the pleasure of that honorable State, to invest, appoint, and empower yourself to come over as governor of this colony, for the space of one year, and so the government to be honorably put upon this place, which might seem to add weight for ever hereafter in the constant and successive derivation of the same. We

only present it to your deliberate thoughts and consideration, with our hearty desires that your time of stay there, for the effectual perfecting and finishing of your so weighty affairs, may not seem tedious, nor be any discouragement unto you: rather than you shall suffer for loss of time here, or expense there, we are resolved to stretch forth our hands at your return, beyond our strength for your supply."

It does not appear that Williams took any steps to procure for himself the appointment of governor, considering, probably, that it would be a dangerous precedent, and an interference with the right of his fellow-citizens to elect their own officers.

Of Williams's literary industry, we have a new proof, in the publication of a work immediately after his arrival in England. It was written, he says, "in the thickest of the naked Indians of America, in their very wild houses, and by their barbarous fires." The volume is entitled, "Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health, and their Preservatives. London, 1652." After diligent inquiry, the writer is not aware that more than one copy of this work now exists. In the dedication "to the truly honorable the Lady Vane," he says, "your favorable and christian respects to me, your godly and christian letters to me, so many thousand miles distant in America; and your many gracioue demonstrations of an humble and christian spirit breathing in you, are a three-fold cord which have drawn these lines into your presence." There is also prefixed to the work a letter to his wife, which affords pleasing evidence of his affectionately domestic character from which we give the following extract:—

"My dearest love and companion in this vale of tears,—Thy late sudden and dangerous sickness, and the Lord's most gracious and speedy raising thee up from the gates and jaws of death, as they were wonderful in their own and others' eyes, so I earnestly desire they may be ever in our

thoughts, as a warning from heaven to make ready for a sudden call to be gone from hence—to live the rest of our short, uncertain span, more as strangers, longing and breathing after another home and country—to cast off our great cares, and fears, and desires, and joys about the candle of this vain life, that is so soon blown out, and to trust in the living God. I send thee—though in winter—a handful of flowers, made up in a little posy, for thy dear self and our dear children, to look and smell on, when I, as grass of the field, shall be gone and withered."

The work is divided into three parts—1. "Arguments of spiritual life, wherein the weakest child of God may find his spiritual life apparent, though overcast and eclipsed with spiritual weakness. 2. Arguments of the strength and vigor of the spirit of life and holiness; in which the strongest and eldest in Christ may find experiments of spiritual health, and christian activity and cheerfulness." 3. Some means are proposed wherein the Spirit of God usually breatheth for the preserving and maintaining of a truly spiritual and christian health and cheerfulness." It manifests throughout deep and enlightened piety, and concludes in the following language:—"How frequent, how constant, should we be—like Christ Jesus, our founder and example—in doing good, especially to the souls of all men, especially to the household of faith; yea, even to our enemies, when we remember this is our seed-time, of which every minute is precious, and that as our *sowing* is, must be our eternal harvest."

Within less than a month from the time the above-mentioned book issued from the press, he published a small treatise, with the title, "The Hireling Ministry none of Christ's; or, a Discourse touching the propagating the Gospel of Christ Jesus," &c. The chief object of this work is, to oppose a legal establishment of religion, and the compulsory support of the clergy, by tithes, and other modes of taxation. It is not, however, as its title would now seem to import, an argument

against the maintenance of ministers of the gospel, to which the author insists they are entitled. He earnestly contends for the right of "all the people of the three nations to choose and maintain what worship and ministry their souls and consciencesare persuaded thereof." He also expresses, in this volume, the following enlightened opinions respecting the Jews:— "By the merciful assistance of the Most High, I have desired to labor in Europe, in America, with English, with barbarians; yea, and also I have longed after some trading with the Jews themselves, for whose hard measure I fear the nations and England hath yet a score to pay."

In the year 1647, the Rev. John Cotton attempted a reply to the "Bloudy Tenent," in which he maintained the right of the magistrate to interfere for the promotion of truth and the suppression of error. It was during this visit to England, and while thus engaged in the service of his own colony, that Williams, in the winter of 1652, prepared for the press, and published, a rejoinder, entitled, "The Bloudy Tenent, yet more bloody by Mr. Cotton's endeavor to wash it white in the Blood of the Lamb. Of whose precious blood, spilt in the blood of his servants, and of the blood of millions spilt in former and later wars for conscience sake, that most Bloody Tenent of persecution for cause of conscience, upon a second trial, is found now more apparently and more notoriously guilty."

In this rejoinder to Mr. Cotton the following topics are principally treated:—"1. The Nature of Persecution. 2. The Power of the Civil Sword in Spirituals examined. 3. The Parliament's permission of Dissenting Consciences justified. Also (as a testimony to Mr. Clarke's) is added a Letter to Mr. Endicott, Governor of the Massachusetts, in N. E. By R. Williams, of Providence, in New England. London, printed 1652." It is a quarto volume of three hundred and seventy-four pages. The same clear, enlarged, and consistent views of religious freedom are maintained in

this work as in his preceding ones, with additional arguments, evincing an acute, vigorous and fearless mind, imbued with various erudition and undissembled piety. It is characterized by the kindest tone, and pervaded by a courteousness of style unusual in the controversial writings of that age. The author says:—"The Most Holy and All-seeing knows how bitterly I lament the least difference with Mr. Cotton, yea, with the least of the followers of Jesus, of what conscience or worship soever."

In the appendix is an address "To the Clergy of the four great Parties, professing the Name of Christ Jesus, in England, Scotland, and Ireland; viz., the Popish, Prelatical, Presbyterian, and Independent;" from which we make the following extract:—

"WORTHY SIRS,—I have pleaded the cause of your several and respective consciences against the bloody doctrine of persecution, in my former labors, and in this my present rejoinder to Mr. Cotton. And yet I must pray leave, without offence, to say, I have impartially opposed and charged your consciences also, so far as guilty of that bloody doctrine of persecuting each other for your consciences.

"You four have torn the seamless coat of the Son of God into four pieces, and, to say nothing of former times and tearings, you four have torn the three nations into thousands of pieces and distractions. The two former of you, the popish and protestant prelatical, are brethren; so are the latter, the presbyterian and independent. But, oh, how *rara est*, &c.? What concord, what love, what pity, hath ever yet appeared amongst you, when the providence of the Most High and Only Wise hath granted you your patents of mutual and successive dominion and precedency.

"Just like two men, whom I have known break out to blows and wrestling, so have the protestant bishops fought and wrestled with the popish, and the popish with the protestant! The presbyterian with the independent, and the

independent with the presbyterian! And our chronicles and experiences have told this nation, and the world, how he whose turn it is to be brought under, hath ever felt a heavy, wrathful hand of an unbrotherly and unchristian persecutor!"

The following passage, in allusion to the episcopal clergy who had been ejected from their benefices, shows that his sympathies embraced all the persecuted without regard to denomination: "I make another humble plea—and that, I believe, with all the reason and justice in the world—that such who are ejected, undone, impoverished, might, some way from the state or you, receive relief and succour: considering, that the very nation's constitution hath occasioned parents to train up, and persons to give themselves to studies, though, in truth, but in a way of trade and bargaining before God; yet is, according to the custom of the nation, who ought, therefore, to share also in the fault of such priests and ministers who in all changes are ejected." But to return to the affairs of his own colony, which, whether at home or abroad, were the primary objects of his solicitude. This, and other interesting features in his public and private character, are illustrated in the following extracts from his correspondence. In a letter to his friend, Gregory Dexter, of Providence, dated August 7, 1652, he says:—

"By my public letters, you will see how we wrestle, and how we are like yet to wrestle, in the hopes of an end. Praised be the Lord, we are preserved, the nation is preserved, the parliament sits, God's people are secure, too secure. A great opinion is, that the kingdom of Christ is risen, and 'the kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.' (Rev. xi.) Others have fear of the slaughter of the witnesses yet approaching. Divers friends, of all sorts, here, long to see you, and wonder you come not over. For myself, I had hopes to have got away by this ship, but I see now the mind of the Lord to hold me here one year longer. It is God's mercy, his very great

mercy, that we have obtained this interim encouragement from the council of state, that you may cheerfully go in the name of a colony, until the controversy is determined. The determination of it, sir, I fear, will be a work of time; I fear longer than we have yet been here, for our adversaries threaten to make a last appeal to the parliament, in case we get the day before the council.

"Sir, in this regard, and when my public business is over, I am resolved to begin my old law-suit, so that I have no thought of return until spring come twelve months. My duty and affection hath compelled me to acquaint my poor companion with it. I consider our many children, the danger of the seas and enemies, and, therefore, I write not positively for her, only I acquaint her with our affairs. I tell her, joyful I should be of her being here with me, until our state affairs were ended, and I freely leave her to wait upon the Lord for direction, and, according as she finds her spirit free and cheerful, to come or stay. If it please the Lord to give her a free spirit, to cast herself upon the Lord, I doubt not of your love and faithful care, in anything she hath occasion to use your help, concerning our children and affairs, during our absence; but I conclude, whom have I in heaven or earth but thee? and so humbly and thankfully stay in the Lord's pleasure, as only and infinitely best and sweetest."

The order of the council of state, directing the several plantations to unite again under the government of the charter, was brought to Newport in the early part of the year 1653. Such, however, were the jealousies which had sprung up during the separation of the towns, that it was found easier to command than to enforce obedience. Williams, with his associate, continued in England, to watch the progress of events and sustain the rights of the colony. The following letter shows how much they were indebted to the friendly aid of Sir Henry Vane. It is addressed to the towns of Providence and Warwick:—

From Sir Henry Vane's, at Belleau, in Lincolnshire.

"*April* 1*st*, 1653.

"My dear and loving Friends and Neighbors of Providence and Warwick,—Our noble friend, Sir Henry Vane, having the navy of England mostly depending on his care, and going down to the navy at Portsmouth, I was invited by them both to accompany his lady to Lincolnshire, where I shall yet stay, as I fear, until the ship is gone. I must, therefore, pray your pardon, that by the post, I send this to London. I hope it may have pleased the Most High Lord of sea and land to bring Captain C.'s ship and dear Mr. Dyre unto you, and with him the council's letters, which answer the petition Sir Henry Vane and myself drew up, and the council, by Sir Henry's mediation granted us, for the confirmation of the charter, until the determination of the controversy. This determination, you may please to understand, is hindered by two main obstructions. The first is, the mighty war with the Dutch, which makes England, and Holland, and the nations tremble. This hath made the parliament set Sir Henry Vane and two or three more as commissioners to manage the war, which they have done, with much engaging the name of God with them, who hath appeared in helping sixty of ours against almost three hundred of their men-of war, and, perchance, to the sinking and taking about one hundred of theirs, and but one of ours, which was sunk by our own men.

"Our second obstruction is the opposition of our adversaries, Sir Arthur Haselrige, and Colonel Fenwicke—who hath married his daughter—Mr. Winslow, and Mr. Hopkins, both in great place; and all the friends they can make in parliament and council, and all the priests, both presbyterian and independent; so that we stand as two armies, ready to engage, observing the motions and postures each of the other, and yet shy each of other. Under God, the sheet-anchor of

our ship is Sir Henry, who will do as the eye of God leads him; and he faithfully promised me that he would observe the motion of our New England business, while I staid some ten weeks with his lady in Lincolnshire. Besides, here are great thoughts and preparation for a new parliament—some of our friends are apt to think another parliament will more favor us and our cause than this has done. You may please to put my condition into your soul's cases; remember I am a father and a husband. I have longed earnestly to return with the last ship, and with these; yet I have not been willing to withdraw my shoulders from the burthen, lest it pinch others, and may fall heavy upon all; except you are pleased to give to me a discharge. If you conceive it necessary for me still to attend this service, pray you consider if it be not convenient that my poor wife be encouraged to come over to me, and to wait together, on the good pleasure of God, for the end of this matter. You know my many weights hanging on me, how my own place stands, and how many reasons I have to cause me to make haste, yet I would not lose their estates, peace, and liberty, by leaving hastily. I write to my dear wife, my great desire of her coming while I stay, yet left it to the freedom of her spirit, because of the many dangers. Truly, at present the seas are dangerous, but not comparably so much, nor likely to be, because of the late defeat of the Dutch, and their present sending to us offers of peace.

"My dear friends, although it pleased God himself, by many favors, to encourage me, yet please you to remember, that no man can stay here as I do, having a present employment there, without much self-denial, which I beseech God for more, and for you also, that no private respects, or gains, or quarrels, may cause you to neglect the public and common safety, peace and liberties. I beseech the blessed God to keep fresh in your thoughts what he hath done for Providence Plantations.

"My dear respects to yourselves, wives, and children. I beseech the eternal God to be seen amongst you; so prays your most faithful and affectionate friend and servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"P. S. My love to all my Indian friends."

CHAPTER XIII.

WILLIAMS'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE DAUGHTER OF SIR EDWARD COKE—HIS INTERCOURSE WITH SIR HENRY VANE, CROMWELL, AND MILTON.

AMIDST his engrossing and important occupations, Roger Williams did not forget the family of his former benefactor, Sir Edward Coke. The following correspondence between him and Mrs. Sadleir, the daughter of Sir Edward, is now for the first time published:—

"MY MUCH-HONORED FRIEND, MRS. SADLEIR,—The never-dying honor and respect which I owe to that dear and honorable root and his branches, and, amongst the rest, to your much-honored self, have emboldened me, once more, to inquire after your dear husband's and your life, and health, and welfare. This last winter I landed, once more, in my native country, being sent over from some parts of New England with some addresses to the parliament.

"My very great business, and my very great straits of time, and my very great journey homeward to my dear yoke-fellow and many children, I greatly fear will not permit me to present my ever-obliged duty and service to you, at Stondon, especially if it please God that I may despatch my affairs to depart with the ships within this fortnight. I am, therefore, humbly bold to crave your favorable consideration, and pardon, and acceptance, of these my humble respects and remembrances. It hath pleased the Most High to carry

me on eagles' wings, through mighty labors, mighty hazards, mighty sufferings, and to vouchsafe to use so base an instrument—as I humbly hope—to glorify himself, in many of my trials and sufferings, both amongst the English and barbarians.

"I have been formerly, and since I landed, occasioned to take up the two-edged sword of God's Spirit, the word of God, and to appear in public in some contests against the ministers of Old and New England, as touching the true ministry of Christ and the soul freedoms of the people. Since I landed, I have published two or three things, and have a large discourse at the press, but 'tis controversial, with which I will not trouble your meditations; only I crave the boldness to send you a plain and peaceable discourse, of my own personal experiments, which, in a letter to my dear wife—upon the occasion of her great sickness near death—I sent her, being absent myself amongst the Indians. And being greatly obliged to Sir Henry Vane, junior—once governor of New England—and his lady, I was persuaded to publish it in her name, and humbly to present your honorable hands with one or two of them. I humbly pray you to cast a serious eye on the holy Scriptures, on which the examinations are grounded. I could have dressed forth the matter like some sermons which, formerly, I used to pen. But the Father of lights hath long since shown me the vanity and soul-deceit of such points and flourishes. I desire to know nothing, to profess nothing, but the Son of God, the King of souls and consciences; and I desire to be more thankful for a reproof for aught I affirm than for applause and commendation. I have been oft glad in the wilderness of America to have been reproved for going in a wrong path, and to be directed by a naked Indian boy in my travels. How much more should we rejoice in the wounds of such as we hope love us in Christ Jesus, than in the deceitful kisses of soul-deceiving and soul-killing friends.

"My much-honored friend, that man of honor, and wisdom, and piety, your dear father, was often pleased to call me his son; and truly it was as bitter as death to me when Bishop Laud pursued me out of this land, and my conscience was persuaded against the national church, and ceremonies, and bishops, beyond the conscience of your dear father. I say it was as bitter as death to me, when I rode Windsor way, to take ship at Bristow, and saw Stoke House, where the blessed man was; and I then durst not acquaint him with my conscience, and my flight. But how many thousand times since have I had honorable and precious remembrance of his person, and the life, the writings, the speeches, and the examples of that glorious light. And I may truly say, that beside my natural inclination to study and activity, his example, instruction, and encouragement, have spurred me on to a more than ordinary, industrious, and patient course in my whole course hitherto.

"What I have done and suffered—and I hope for the truth of God, according to my conscience—in Old and New England, I should be a fool in relating, for I desire to say, not to King David—as once Mephibosheth—but to King Jesus, 'What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog?' And I would not tell yourself of this, but that you may acknowledge some beams of his holy wisdom and goodness, who hath not suffered all your own and your dear father's smiles to have been lost upon so poor and despicable an object. I confess I have many adversaries, and also many friends, and divers eminent. It hath pleased the general himself to send for me, and to entertain many discourses with me at several times; which, as it magnifies his christian nobleness and courtesy, so much more doth it magnify *His* infinite mercy and goodness, and wisdom, who hath helped me, poor worm, to sow that seed in doing and suffering—I hope for God—that as your honorable father was wont to say, he that shall harrow what I have sown, must rise early. And

yet I am a worm and nothing, and desire only to find my all in the blood of an holy Saviour, in whom I desire to be

"Your honored,

"Most thankful, and faithful servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"My humble respects presented to Mr. Sadleir.

"From my lodgings near St. Martin's, at Mr. Davis his house, at the sign of the Swan."

"For my much-honored, kind friend, Mistress Sadleir, at Stondon, Puckridge, these."

"MR. WILLIAMS,—Since it has pleased God to make the prophet David's complaint ours (Ps. lxxix.): 'O God, the heathen,' &c., and that the apostle St. Peter has so long ago foretold, in his second epistle, the second chapter, by whom these things should be occasioned, I have given over reading many books, and, therefore, with thanks, have returned yours. Those that I now read, besides the Bible, are, first, the late king's book; Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity; Reverend Bishop Andrews's Sermons, with his other divine meditations; Dr. Jer. Taylor's works; and Dr. Tho. Jackson upon the Creed. Some of these my dear father was a great admirer of, and would often call them the glorious lights of the church of England. These lights shall be my guide; I wish they may be yours: for your new lights that are so much cried up, I believe, in the conclusion, they will prove but dark lanterns; therefore I dare not meddle with them.

"Your friend in the old way,

"ANNE SADLEIR."

"MY MUCH-HONORED, KIND FRIEND, MRS. SADLEIR,—My humble respects premised to your much-honored self, and Mr. Sadleir, humbly wishing you the saving knowledge and assurance of that life which is eternal, when this poor min-

ute's dream is over. In my poor span of time, I have been oft in the jaws of death, sickening at sea, shipwrecked on shore, in danger of arrows, swords and bullets: and yet, methinks, the most high and most holy God hath reserved me for some service to his most glorious and eternal majesty.

"I think, sometimes, in this common shipwreck, of mankind, wherein we all are either floating or sinking, despairing or struggling for life, why should I ever faint in striving, as Paul saith, in hopes to save myself, to save others—to call, and cry, and ask, what hope of saving, what hope of life, and of the eternal shore of mercy? Your last letter, my honored friend, I received as a bitter sweeting—as all, that is under the sun, is—sweet, in that I hear from you, and that you continue striving for life eternal; bitter, in that we differ about the way, in the midst of the dangers and distresses.

"O blessed be the hour that ever we saw the light, and came into this vale of tears, if yet, at last, in any way, we may truly see our woful loss and shipwreck, and gain the shore of life and mercy. You were pleased to direct me to divers books, for my satisfaction. I have carefully endeavored to get them, and some I have gotten; and upon my reading, I purpose, with God's help, to render you an ingenuous and candid account of my thoughts, result, &c. At present, I am humbly bold to pray your judicious and loving eye to one of mine.

"'Tis true, I cannot but expect your distate of it; and yet my cordial desire of your soul's peace here, and eternal, and of contributing the least mite toward it, and my humble respects to that blessed root of which you spring, force me to tender my acknowledgements, which, if received or rejected, my cries shall never cease that one eternal life may give us meeting, since this present minute hath such bitter partings.

"For the scope of this *rejoinder*, if it please the Most High to direct your eye to a glance on it, please you to know, that at my last being in England, I wrote a discourse

entitled, 'The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience.' I bent my charge against Mr. Cotton especially, your standard-bearer of New English ministers. That discourse he since answered, and calls his book, 'The Bloody Tenent made white in the Blood of the Lamb.' This rejoinder of mine, as I humbly hope, unwasheth his washings, and proves that in soul matters no weapons but soul weapons are reaching and effectual.

"I am your most unworthy servant, yet unfeignedly respective,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"For his much-honored, kind friend, Mrs. Anne Sadleir, at Stondon, in Hartfordshire, near Puckridge."

"SIR,—I thank God my blessed parents bred me up in the old and best religion, and it is my glory that I am a member of the church of England, as it was when all the reformed churches gave her the right hand. When I cast mine eye upon the frontispiece of your book, and saw it entitled 'the Bloudy Tenent,' I durst not adventure to look into it, for fear it should bring into my memory the much blood that has of late been shed, and which I would fain forget; therefore I do, with thanks, return it. I cannot call to mind any blood shed for conscience:—some few that went about to make a rent in our once well-governed church were punished, but none suffered death. But this I know, that since it has been left to every man's conscience to fancy what religion he list, there has more christian blood been shed than was in the ten persecutions. And some of that blood, will, I fear, cry till the day of judgment. But you know what the Scripture says, that when there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes,—but what became of that, the sacred story will tell you.

"Thus entreating you to trouble me no more in this kind, and wishing you a good journey to your charge in New Providence, I rest

"YOUR FRIEND, IN THE OLD AND BEST WAY."

My honored, kind Friend, Mrs. Sadleir,—I greatly rejoiced to hear from you, although now an opposite to me, even in the highest points of heaven and eternity.

"Two things your lines express:—First, your confidence in your own old way, &c.

"Second. Civility and gentleness in that—not being pleased to accept my respects and labors presented—yet you gently, with thanks and your reason, return them. I shall not be so sorry you differ from me, if yet the Father of spirits please to vouchsafe you a spirit of christian searching and examination. In hope of which I shall humbly consider of the particulars of your letter.

"1. That you think an heap of timber or pile of stones to be God's sanctuary now. (Ps. lxxix. 1.) In Christ's esteem, and in gospel language, that you think those to be false teachers and prophets (2 Pet. ii. 1) who are not—after the old way—distinguished by the canonical colors of white, red, black, &c.

"That you admire the king's book, and Bp. Andrews his sermons, and Hooker's Polity, &c., and profess them to be your lights and guides, and desire them mine, and believe the new lights will prove dark lanterns, &c. I am far from wondering at it, for all this have I done myself, until the Father of Spirits mercifully persuaded mine to swallow down no longer without chewing; to chew no longer without tasting; to taste no longer without begging the Holy Spirit of God to enlighten and enliven mine against the fear of men, tradition of fathers, or the favor or custom of any men or times.

"2. I now find that the church and sanctuary of Christ Jesus consists not of dead but of living stones.* Is not a parish or a national church forced—to the pretended bed of Christ's worship—by laws and swords?†

"His true lovers are volunteers, born of his Spirit, the

* 1 Pet. ii. 3, 4. † Cant. i. 16.

now only holy nation and royal priesthood (1 Pet. ii., Ps. cx.) I find that, in respect of ministerial function and office, such ministers, not only popish but protestant, not only episcopal but presbyterian, not only presbyterian but independent also, are all of them, one as well as another, false prophets and teachers, so far as they are hirelings, and make a trade and living of preaching (John x.), as I have lately opened in my "Discourse of the Hireling Ministry none of Christ's."

"3. I have read those books you mention, and the king's book, which commends two of them, Bp. Andrews's and Hooker's—yea, and a third also, Bp. Laud's: and as for the king, I knew his person, vicious, a swearer from his youth, and an oppressor and persecutor of good men (to say nothing of his own father), and the blood of so many hundred thousands English, Irish, Scotch, French, lately charged upon him. Against his and his blasphemous father's cruelties, your own dear father, and many precious men, shall rise up shortly and cry for vengeance.

"4. But for the book itself—if it be his—and theirs you please to mention, and thousands more, not only protestants of several sects, but of some papists and jesuits also—famous for worldly repute, &c.—I have found them sharp and witty, plausible and delightful, devout and pathetical. And I have been amazed to see the whole world of our forefathers, wise and gallant, wondering after the glory of the Romish learning and worship. (Rev. xiii.) But amongst them all whom I have so diligently read and heard, how few express the simplicity, the plainness, the meekness, and true humility of the learning of the Son of God.

"5. But, at last, it pleased the God and Father of mercies to persuade mine heart of the merely formal, customary, and traditional professions of Christ Jesus, with which the world is filled. I see that the Jews believe Christ Jesus was a deceiver, because he came not with external pomps and excellency.

"The Turks—so many millions of them—prefer their Mahomet before Christ Jesus, even upon such carnal and worldly respects, and yet avouch themselves to be the only Muselmanni or true believers. The catholics account us heretics, diabloes, &c.; and why? but because we worship not such a golden Christ and his glorious vicar and lieutenant. The several sects of common protestants content themselves with a traditional worship, and boast they are no Jews, no Turks,* nor catholics, and yet forget their own formal dead faith,† dead hope, dead joys, and yet, *nescio vos*, I know you not, depart from me, which shall be thundered out to many gallant professors and confidents, who have held out a lamp and form of religion, yea, and possibly of godliness too, and yet have denied the power and life of it.

"Therefore, my much-honored friend, while you believe the darkness of the new lights, and profess your confidence, and desire of my walking with you in the old way: I most humbly pray so much Berean civility at your ladyship's hands as to search and remember—

"1. First, the Lord Christ's famous resolution of that question put to him, as touching the number that shall be saved (Luke xiii. 24), 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able.'

"2ndly. There is an absolute necessity (not so of a true order of ministry, baptism, &c., but) of a true regeneration and new birth, without which it is impossible to enter into or to see the kingdom of God. (John iii. &c.)

"3rdly. As to the religion and the worship of God, the common religion of the whole world, and the nations of it, it is but customary and traditional, from father to son, from which (old ways, &c.), traditions, Christ Jesus, delivers his, not with gold and silver, but with his precious blood. (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.)

"4thly. Without spiritual and diligent examination of our

* Matt. vii. 21, 22. † 2 Tim. iii. 9.

hearts, it is impossible that we can attain true solid joy and comfort, either in point of regeneration or worship, or whatever we do. (2 Cor. xiii. 5; Rom. xiv. 23.)

"5thly. In the examination of both these—personal regeneration and worship—the hearts of all the children of men are most apt to cheat, and cozen, and deceive themselves: yea, and the wiser a man is, the more apt and willing he is to be deceived. (Jer. xvii.; Gal. vi.; 1 Cor. iii. 18.)

"6thly. It is impossible there should be a true search, without the Holy Spirit, who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (Rom. viii.; Ps. cxliii. 10.)

"Lastly. God's Spirit persuadeth the hearts of his true servants: First, to be willing to be searched by him, which they exceedingly beg of him, with holy fear of self-deceit and hypocrisy.

"Second. To be led by him in the way everlasting: (Ps. cxxxix.), whether it seem old in respect of institution, or new in respect of restoration. This I humbly pray for your precious soul, of the God and Father of mercies, even your eternal joy and salvation. Earnestly desirous to be in the old way, which is the narrow way, which leads to life, which few find.

"Your most humble, though most unworthy servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

"My honored Friend, since you please not to read mine, let me pray leave to request your reading of one book of your own authors. I mean the 'Liberty of Prophesying,' penned by (so called) Dr. Jer. Taylor. In the which is excellently asserted the toleration of different religions, yea, in a respect, that of the papists themselves, which is a new way of soul freedom, and yet is the old way of Christ Jesus, as all his holy Testament declares.

"I also humbly wish that you may please to read over impartially Mr. Milton's answer to the king's book."

"Mr. Williams,—I thought my first letter would have given you so much satisfaction, that, in that kind, I should never have heard of you any more; but it seems you have a face of brass, so that you cannot blush. But since you press me to it, I must let you know, as I did before (Ps. lxxix.), that the prohet David there complains that the heathen had defiled the holy temple, and made Jerusalem a heap of stones. And our blessed Saviour, when he whipped the buyers and sellers out of the temple, told them that they had made his Father's house a den of thieves. Those were but material temples, and commanded by God to be built, and his name there to be worshipped. The living temples are those that the same prophet, in the psalm before mentioned (verse the 2nd and 3rd), 'The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to the fowls of the air, and the flesh of thy saints to the beasts of the land. Their blood have they shed like water,' &c. And these were the living temples whose loss the prophet so much laments; and had he lived in these times, he would have doubled these lamentations. For the foul and false aspersions you have cast upon that king, of ever-blessed memory, Charles, the martyr, I protest I trembled when I read them, and none but such a villain as yourself would have wrote them. Wise Solomon has taught me another lesson in his 24th of his Proverbs, at 21st verse, to fear God and the king, and not to meddle with them that are given to change. Mark well that. The 8th of Eccl., verse the 2nd, 'I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.' Verse the 20th of the 10th chap., 'Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought;' and, if I be not mistaken, the fifth commandment is the crown commandment. Rom. xiii., the 1st and 2nd verses, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for,' &c.; with many more places to the same purpose. Thus, you see, I have the law, with the Old and New Testament, on my side.

"But it has been the lot of the best kings to lie under the lash of ill tongues. Witness blessed David, who was a man after God's own heart, cursed by wicked Shimei, his own subject, and called a man of blood; and good Hezekiah was railed on by a foul-mouthed Rabshakeh; but I do not remember that they were commended, in any place of scripture, for so doing. For the blood you mention, which has been shed in these times, which you would father upon the late king, there is a book called the History of Independency —a book worth your reading—that will tell you by whom all this christian blood has been shed. If you cannot get that, there is a sermon in print of one Paul Knells, the text the first of Amos, verse the second, that will inform you.

"For Milton's book, that you desire I should read, if I be not mistaken, that is he that has wrote a book of the lawfulness of divorce; and, if report says true, he had, at that time, two or three wives living. This, perhaps, were good doctrine in New England; but it is most abominable in Old England. For his book that he wrote against the late king that you would have me read, you should have taken notice of God's judgment upon him, who stroke him with blindness; and, as I have heard, he was fain to have the help of one Andrew Marvell, or else he could not have finished that most accursed libel. God has began his judgment upon him here —his punishment will be hereafter in hell. But have you seen the answer to it? If you can get it, I assure you it is worth your reading.

"I have also read Taylor's book of the Liberty of Prophesying; though it please not me, yet I am sure it does you, or else I [know]* you [would]* not have wrote to me to have read it. I say, it and you would make a good fire. But have you seen his Divine Institution of the Office Ministerial? I assure that is both worth your reading and practice. Bishop Laud's book against Fisher I have read long since;

* These words are not in the MS.

which, if you have not done, let me tell you that he has deeply wounded the pope; and, I believe, howsoever he be slighted, he will rise a saint, when many seeming ones, such as you are, will rise devils.

"I cannot conclude without putting you in mind how dear a lover and great an admirer my father was of the liturgy of the church of England, and would often say, no reformed church had the like. He was constant to it, both in his life and at his death. I mean to walk in his steps; and, truly, when I consider who were the composers of it, and how they sealed the truth of it with their blood, I cannot but wonder why it should now of late be thus contemned. By what I have now writ, you know how I stand affected. I will walk as directly to heaven as I can, in which place, if you will turn from being a rebel, and fear God and obey the king, there is hope I may meet you there; howsoever, trouble me no more with your letters, for they are very troublesome to her that wishes you in the place from whence you came."*

Near the direction, on the outside, of Williams's first letter, there is the following note by Mrs. Sadleir:—

"This Roger Williams, when he was a youth, would, in a short hand, take sermons and speeches in the Star Chamber, and present them to my dear father. He, seeing so hopeful a youth, took such liking to him that he sent him in to Sutton's Hospital, and he was the second that was placed there; full little did he think that he would have proved such a rebel to God, the king, and his country. I leave his let-

* This correspondence, between Roger Williams and Mrs. Sadleir, is copied from the original manuscripts in the library of Trinity college, Cambridge. Like many of Williams's letters, they are without date: but the allusions to his works, and other circumstances, clearly show that they were written during his second visit, in 1652-3. The writer has examined the originals of the letters; and for the knowledge of their existence he is indebted to the courtesy of the Hon. George Bancroft, author of the History of the United States, and late minister to Great Britain.

ters, that, if ever he has the face to return into his native country, Tyburn may give him welcome."

These letters present a lively picture of the influence of party spirit upon social intercourse, at that remarkable period. The gratitude and humility of Williams are finely contrasted with the cold repulsiveness, and, at last, rude insolence of his correspondent, whose final letter pours forth as much venom as could well flow from a lady's pen. The concentrated essence of it, in her postscript, reminds us of the mutation in human affairs. The rebel she denounces has acquired a nobler fame than even that of the acute lawyer, her father; while, if her own name is rescued from oblivion, she owes it to her accidental connexion with the man she consigns to Tyburn.

We may here observe, that while Williams was in England, in addition to his numerous avocations, his exertions were called forth in the metropolis "for the supply of the poor with wood during the stop of the coals from Newcastle, and the mutinies of the poor," in consequence of the high price of every species of fuel. He also refers to opportunities he had to "run the road of preferment, as well in Old as in New England."

Though he made great sacrifices in order to undertake his present agency, his visit, at this time, to the mother-country must have been peculiarly gratifying. His official duties brought him into frequent intercourse with many of the eminent statesmen who then adorned the legislature, and wielded the power of the state. He renewed his friendship with Sir Henry Vane, the former governor of Massachusetts, and enjoyed his hospitality, at his country-seat, for many weeks, He secured on behalf of his beloved colony the powerful influence of Cromwell, with whom he had frequent interviews. His hours of leisure were often passed with a kindred spirit, of transcendent genius—Milton—to whom he refers in his subsequent correspondence. Imagination conceives those

two great men, representatives of a brighter future, discussing the true nature of that religious liberty, which few besides themselves clearly discerned. We can fancy them applying the simple principle of the non-interference of the state with religion to the solution of the vexed questions which still continued to harrass and divide the English church reformers. And if their hopes of the speedy triumph of this principle in England sometimes failed, they would rejoice together that there was at least one spot on the earth's wide surface, where conscience, with joyful exultation, might exclaim, I am free!

CHAPTER XIV.

WILLIAMS RETURNS TO AMERICA—HIS LETTER TO GOVERNOR WINTHROP—RE-ORGANIZATION OF THE GOVERNMENT—HE IS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE COLONY—HIS LETTER TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS—HIS LETTER ON CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

THOUGH it appears that inducements had been held out to Williams to remain in England, yet nothing could detain him from his beloved colony. The objects of his mission not being fully accomplished, he left the remainder of the business in the hands of Mr. Clarke, and returned, early in the summer of 1654. He landed at Boston, bringing with him an order from the lord-protector's council, requiring the authorities of Massachusetts to allow him, in future, to embark or land in their territories without molestation.

Soon after his return, he addressed a letter to his friend, Mr. Winthrop, afterwards governor of Connecticut: a gentleman greatly respected as a christian, a philosopher, and a magistrate. In the following passage, he relates several incidents connected with his visit to England:—

"FOR MY MUCH-HONOURED, KIND FRIEND, MR. JOHN WINTHROP, AT PEQUOD.

"*Providence, July 12th, '54.*

"SIR,—I was humbly bold to salute you from our native

country; and now, by the gracious hand of the Lord, once more saluting this wilderness, I crave your wonted patience to my wonted boldness, who ever honored and loved, and ever shall, the root and branches of your dear name. How joyful, therefore, was I to hear of your abode as a stake and pillar in these parts, and of your healths—your own, Mrs. Winthrop, and your branches—although some sad mixtures we have had from the sad tidings (if true) of the late loss and cutting off of one of them.

"Sir, I was lately upon the wing to have waited on you at your house. I had disposed all for my journey, and my staff was in my hand, but it pleased the Lord to interpose some impediments, so that I am compelled to a suspension for a season, and choose at present thus to visit you. I had no letters for you, but yours were well. I was at the lodgings of Major Winthrop and Mr. Peters, but I missed them. Your brother flourisheth in good esteem, and is eminent for maintaining the freedom of the conscience, as to matters of belief, religion, and worship. Your father Peters* preacheth the same doctrine, though not so zealously as some years since; yet cries out against New English rigidities and persecutions. . . . .

"Surely, sir, your father, and all the people of God in England, formerly called *Puritanus Anglicanus*, of late *Roundheads*, now the *Sectarians* (as more or less cut off from the parishes), are now in the saddle and at the helm, so high that *non datur descensus nisi cadendo*. Some cheer up their spirits with the impossibility of another fall or turn; so doth Major-Gen. Harrison, and Mr. Feake, and Mr. John Simpson, now in Windsor castle for preaching against this last change, and against the protector as an usurper, Richard III., &c. So did many think of the last parliament, who were of the vote of fifty-six against priests and tithes, opposite to the vote of the fifty-four who were for them, at least

* Mr. Winthrop had married a daughter of the Rev. Hugh Peters.

for a while. Major-Gen. Harrison was the second in the nation of late, when the loving general and himself joined against the former long parliament, and dissolved them; but now being the head of the fifty-six party, he was confined by the protector and council, within five miles of his father's house, in Staffordshire. That sentence he not obeying, he told me (the day before my leaving London) he was to be sent prisoner into Harfordshire. Surely, sir, he is a very gallant, most deserving, heavenly man, but most high flown for the kingdom of the saints. Others, as to my knowledge, the protector, Lord President Lawrence, and others at helm, with Sir Henry Vane (retired into Lincolnshire, yet daily missed and courted for his assistance), are not so full of that faith of miracles, but still imagine changes and persecutions.

"Sir, I know not how far your judgment hath concurred with the design against the Dutch. I must acknowledge my mourning for it, and when I heard of it at Portsmouth, I confess I wrote letters to the protector and president from thence; as against a most uningenuous and unchristian dedesign, at such a time when the world stood gazing at the so famous treaty for peace, which was then between the two states, and near finished when we set sail. Much I can tell you of the answer I had from court, and I think of the answers I had from heaven—viz., that the Lord would graciously retard us until the tidings of peace (from England) might quench the fire in the kindling of it.

"Sir, I had word from the lord president, at Portsmouth, that the counil had passed three letters as to our business. First, to encourage us; second, to our neighbor colonies not to molest us; third, in exposition of that word dominion, in the late frame of the government of England—viz., that liberty of conscience should be maintained in all American plantations, &c.

"Sir, a great man in America told me that he thought New England would not bear it. I hope better, and that

not only the necessity, but the equity, piety, and christianity of that freedom will more and more shine forth, not to licentiousness (as all mercies are apt to be abused), but to the beauty of christianity, and the lustre of true faith in God and love to poor mankind, &c.

"Sir, I have desires of keeping home. I have long had scruples of selling the natives aught, but what may bring or tend to civilizing. It pleased the Lord to call me for some time, and with some persons, to practise the Hebrew, the Greek, Latin, French, and Dutch. The secretary of the council, Mr. Milton, for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages. Grammar rules begin to be esteemed a tyranny. I taught two young gentlemen, a parliament-man's sons, as we teach our children English—by words, phrases, and constant talk, &c. I have begun with mine own three boys, who labor besides; others are coming to me.

"Sir, I shall rejoice to receive a word of your healths, of the Indian wars, and to be ever yours,

"R. W."

Here we have proof of the extent of Williams's acquirements as a linguist, while we see Milton and himself in the very interesting relation of mutual instructors. It is probable that he "taught two young gentlemen, a parliament-man's sons," as a mode of providing for his own support at this period.

On his arrival at Providence, his first object was to restore union among the several towns, and re-establish the government on its former basis, in accordance with the order of the council of state. The accomplishment of this was no easy task, in consequence of the petty jealousies and local differences, which had been artfully fomented by some turbulent spirits, who thought disorder more propitious to their interests than good government. In this crisis, he addressed a conciliatory letter to the citizens of Providence, in which

he alludes in affecting terms to his trials and sacrifices in their behalf, and urges them to bury their animosities and unite in the reorganization of the government on its old foundations. His efforts to promote union were also enforced, by a letter entrusted to him by Sir Henry Vane, and addressed to the inhabitants of the colony.*

By the skilful policy and persuasive earnestness of Williams, Providence and the other towns soon after appointed commissioners, who met on the 31st of August, 1654, and the articles of union were finally agreed upon, under the existing charter.

Williams was requested, also, by the citizens of Providence, to prepare an answer to Sir Henry Vane's letter in the name of the town. In this answer, dated August 27, 1654, commencing with an expression of regret at the late retirement of Sir Henry "from the helm of public affairs," he speaks of his "loving lines" to the colony as "the sweet fruits of his rest." "Thus the sun, when he retires his brightness from the world, yet from under the very clouds we perceive his presence, and enjoy some light, and heat, and sweet refreshings." He points out the causes which had disturbed the colony, and concludes by expressing the hope "that, when we are gone and rotten, our posterity and children after us shall read, in our town records, your pious and favorable letters, and loving kindness to us, and this our answer, and real endeavor after peace and righteousness."

The first general election was held at Warwick, on the 12th of September, when Roger Williams was chosen president of the colony. At the same time, he was also appointed, together with Mr. Gregory Dexter, to "draw up and send letters of humble thanksgiving to his highness, the lord protector, and Sir Henry Vane, Mr. Holland, and Mr. John Clarke, in the name of the colony; and Mr. Williams is desired to subscribe them, by virtue of his office."

* A curious extract from a work of Sir Vane will be found in the Appendix II.

The auspicious union of the settlements, after an unhappy division of several years, was mainly accomplished by the wisdom and firmness of Williams. One of his first acts after entering upon the duties of his presidency, was to interpose his friendly offices in order to prevent hostilities between the united colonies and some of the neighboring Indian tribes. For this purpose, he addressed a letter to the government of Massachusetts, from which we present the following extracts:—

"*Providence, 5th October*, '54,

"MUCH HONORED SIRS,—I truly wish you peace, and pray your gentle acceptance of a word, I hope not unreasonable.

"We have in these parts a sound of your meditations of war against these natives, amongst whom we dwell. I consider that war is one of those three great sore plagues with which it pleaseth God to afflict the sons of men. I consider, also, that I refused, lately, many offers in my native country, out of a sincere desire to seek the good and peace of this.

"I remember, that, upon the express advice of your ever-honored Mr. Winthrop, deceased,* I first adventured to begin a plantation, among the thickest of these barbarians.

"That in the Pequod wars, it pleased your honored government to employ me in the hazardous and weighty service of negotiating a league between yourselves and the Narragansetts, when the Pequod messengers, who sought the Narragansetts' league against the English, had almost ended that my work and life together.

"That at the subscribing of that solemn league, which, by the mercy of the Lord, I had procured with the Narragan-

* Governor Winthrop died at Boston, on the 26th of March, 1649, aged sixty-two years. He was eleven times chosen governor of Massachusetts. He was one of the purest and most gifted men of his age, and spent his large estate in the public service. His son and grandson were successively governors of Connecticut.

setts, your government was pleased to send unto me the copy of it, subscribed by all hands there, which yet I keep as a monument and a testimony of peace and faithfulness between you both.

"That, since that time, it hath pleased the Lord so to order it, that I have been more or less interested and used in all your great transactions of war or peace between the English and the natives, and have not spared purse, nor pains, nor hazards (very many times), that the whole land, English and natives, might sleep in peace securely.

"That in my last negotiations in England with the parliament, council of state, and his highness, I have been forced to be known so much that if I should be silent I should not only betray mine own peace and yours, but also should be false to their honorable and princely names, whose loves and affections, as well as their supreme authority, are not a little concerned in the peace or war of this country.

"At my last departure for England I was importuned by the Narragansett sachems, and especially by Ninigret, to present their petition to the high sachems of England, that they might not be forced from their religion, and, for not changing their religion, be invaded by war; for they said they were daily visited with threatenings by Indians that came from about the Massachusetts, that if they would not pray they should be destroyed by war. With this their petition I acquainted in private discourses divers of the chiefs of our nation, and especially his highness, who, in many discourses I had with him, never expressed the least displeasure, as hath been here reported, but in the midst of disputes ever expressed a high spirit of love and gentleness, and was often pleased to please himself with very many questions, and my answers about the Indian affairs of this country, and after all hearing of yourself and us, it hath pleased his highness and his council to grant, amongst other favors to this colony, some expressly concerning the very Indians, the native inhabitants of this jurisdiction.

"I therefore humbly offer to your prudent and impartial view, first, these two considerable terms, it pleased the Lord to use to all that profess his name.—Rom. xii. 18.

"I never was against the righteous use of the civil sword of men or nations, but yet, since all men of conscience or prudence ply to windward to maintain their wars to be defensive (as did both king and Scotch, and English, and Irish too in the late wars), I humbly pray your consideration, whether it be not only possible, but very easy, to live and die in peace with all the natives of this country.

"For, secondly, are not all the English of this land generally a persecuted people from their native soil? and hath not the God of peace and Father of mercies made these natives more friendly in this, than our native countrymen in our own land to us? Have they not entered leagues of love, and to this day continued peaceable commerce with us? Are not our families grown up in peace amongst them? Upon which I humbly ask, how it can suit with christian ingenuity to take hold of some seeming occasions for their destruction, which, though the heads be only aimed at, yet all experience tell us, falls on the body and the innocent.

"Thirdly, I pray it may be remembered how greatly the name of God is concerned in this affair, for it cannot be hid how all England and other nations ring with the glorious conversion of the Indians of New England. You know how many books are dispersed throughout the nation on the subject (in some of them the Narragansett chief sachems are publicly branded for refusing to pray and be converted)—how all the pulpits in England have been commanded to sound of this glorious work (I speak not ironically, but only mention what all the printed books mention), and that by the highest command and authority of parliament, and churchwardens went from house to house to gather supplies for this work.

"Honored sirs, whether I have been and am a friend to

the natives' turning to civility and christianity, and whether I have been instrumental, and desire so to be, according to my light, I will not trouble you with; only I beseech you consider how the name of the most holy and jealous God may be preserved between the clashings of these two, viz., the glorious conversion of the Indians in New England, and the unnecessary wars and cruel destruction of the Indians in New England.

"Fourthly, I beseech you forget not that although we are apt to play with this plague of war more than with the other two, famine and pestilence, yet I beseech you consider how the present events of all wars that ever have been in the world have been wonderfully fickle, and the future calamities and revolutions wonderful in the latter end.

"Heretofore, not having liberty of taking ship in your jurisdiction, I was forced to repair unto the Dutch, where my eyes did see that first breaking forth of that Indian war which the Dutch begun, upon the slaughter of some Dutch by the Indians, and they questioned not to finish it in a few days, insomuch that the name of peace, which some offered to mediate, was foolish and odious to them. But before we weighed anchor their bowries were in flames. Dutch and English were slain. Mine eyes saw their flames at their towns, and the flights and hurries of men, women, and children, the present removal of all that could for Holland, and after vast expense and mutual slaughter of Dutch, English, and Indians, about four years the Dutch were forced, to save their plantation from ruin, to make up a most unworthy and dishonorable peace with the Indians. . . . .

"But, lastly, if any be yet zealous of kindling this fire for God, &c., I beseech that gentleman, whoever he be, to lay himself in the opposite scale, with one of the fairest buds that ever the sun of righteousness cherished, Josiah; that most zealous and melting-hearted reformer who would to war, and against warnings, and fell in most untimely death and lamen-

tations, and now stands a pillar of salt to all succeeding generations. . . . .

"How much nobler were it and glorious to the name of God and your own, that no pagan should dare to use the name of an English subject who comes not out in some degree from barbarism to civility—forsaking their filthy nakedness, keeping some kind of cattle, which yet your councils and commands may tend to—and as pious and prudent deceased Mr. Winthrop said, that civility may be a leading step to christianity, is the humble desire of your most unfeigned in all services of love,

"ROGER WILLIAMS,
of Providence Colony, President."

It appears that this letter had a salutary effect. Massachusetts, with a spirit that is honorable to her rulers, was opposed to hostilities, and thus prevented a general war with the natives, although it had been already determined on by the commissioners of the united colonies. Williams had succeeded in restoring the regular operations of government, but the office of president was at that time encompassed with many difficulties. There were not wanting turbulent spirits who were uneasy and impatient under the restraints of law and order. During the early part of his administration, one of these addressed a seditious pamphlet to the town of Providence, and was active in circulating it among the citizens, maintaining "that it was blood-guiltiness, and against the rule of the gospel, to execute judgment upon transgressors against the public or private weal." This doctrine tended to the subversion of all civil society; yet, it is not surprising that in a community enjoying unrestricted freedom of opinion, some were found who would pervert the privilege into unbounded license. While such sentiments were propagated, Williams could not remain silent, and accordingly addressed a letter to the town, in which he explicitly denies

that he had ever given the slightest sanction to principles so hostile to the civil peace, and the dictates of reason and scripture. He clearly shows that absolute liberty of conscience is quite consistent with the restraints of civil government; and illustrates this position by a very ingenious allegory. The letter is copied from the records of the city of Providence :—

"That ever I should speak or write a tittle, that tends to such an infinite liberty of conscience, is a mistake, and which I have ever disclaimed and abhorred. To prevent such mistakes, I shall at present only propose this case: There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or a human combination or society. It hath fallen out sometimes, that both papists and protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked in one ship; upon which supposal I affirm, that all the liberty of conscience, that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges—that none of the papists, protestants, Jews, or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practise any. I further add, that I never denied, that notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ship's course, yea, and also command that justice, peace, and sobriety, be kept and practised, both among the seamen and all the passengers. If any of the seamen refuse to perform their services, or passengers to pay their freight; if any refuse to help, in person or purse, towards the common charges or defence; if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace or preservation; if any shall mutiny and rise up against their commanders and officers; if any should preach or write that there ought to be no commanders or officers, because all are equal in Christ, therefore no masters nor officers, no laws nor orders, nor cor-

rections nor punishments;—I say, I never denied, but in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel and punish such transgressors, according to their deserts and merits. This, if seriously and honestly minded, may, if it so please the Father of lights, let in some light to such as willingly shut not their eyes.

"I remain studious of your common peace and liberty,

"ROGER WILLIAMS."

CHAPTER XV.

LETTER FROM CROMWELL—WILLIAMS'S ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH MASSACHUSETTS—SEVERE LAWS AGAINST THE QUAKERS IN THE OTHER COLONIES—RHODE ISLAND REFUSES TO JOIN IN THE PERSECUTION—LETTER TO JOHN CLARKE—WILLIAMS RETIRES FROM THE PRESIDENCY.

The current of affairs did not yet flow quite smoothly in the little colony. Though a very large majority adhered to the cause of the commonwealth, yet a few royalists attempted to create factions. Complaints were made by the constituted authorities to Cromwell, who addressed the following letter to the colony:—

"To our trusty and well-beloved the president, assistants, and inhabitants of Rhode Island, together with the rest of the Providence Plantations, in the Narragansett Bay, in New England.

"Gentlemen,—Your agent here hath represented unto us some particulars concerning your government, which you judge necessary to be settled by us here. But by reason of the other great and weighty affairs of this commonwealth, we have been necessitated to defer the consideration of them to a further opportunity; for the mean time we were willing to let you know that you are to proceed in your government according to the tenor of your charter, formerly granted

on that behalf; taking care of the peace and safety of those plantations, that neither through any intestine commotions, or foreign invasions, there do arise any detriment or dishonor to this commonwealth, or yourselves, as far as you, by your care and diligence, can prevent. And as for the things which are before us, they shall, as soon as the other occasions will permit, receive a just and fitting determination. And so we bid you farewell, and rest

"Your very loving friend,

"29*th March*, 1655.* "OLIVER P."

The protector's interest in the colony, and his friendship for Williams, was manifested on this as well as many other occasions. In his letters the latter repeatedly alludes to familiar conversations with Cromwell, to whom he was drawn by a unity of opinion on the great question of religious liberty.

There is a tradition that these two distinguished men were remotely allied by birth; and a fact, recorded in the genealogy of the Cromwell family, gives an air of probability, at least, to this supposition. Cromwell's paternal ancestry is traced to Richard Williams, of Wales, who was knighted by Henry VIII. by the name of Cromwell, after his uncle, whose heir he became.†

The protector's letter served to strengthen the government, and, in pursuance of his advice, the assembly immediately passed an act, declaring, that "if any person or persons be found, by the examination and judgment of the general court of commissioners, to be a ringleader or ringleaders of factions or divisions among us, he or they shall be sent over at his or their own charges, as prisoners, to receive his or their trial or sentence, at the pleasure of his highness and the lords of his council." This act shows, that while the leg-

* Colony Records.

† See a genealogy of the Cromwell family in Appendix III.

islature recognized the rights of conscience, they were resolved to enforce civil obedience. The prompt and resolute measures adopted by the authorities produced peace and good order among the settlements. Coddington and others gave in their allegiance to the colony, and the old form of government continued until the adoption of the charter of 1663.

During the presidency of Williams, he made efforts to establish more friendly relations with the neighboring colonies, especially with Massachusetts. The people of Rhode Island were not allowed to procure fire-arms and ammunition from Boston, though they were exposed to imminent peril from the Indians, who were abundantly supplied from various quarters. In November, 1655, he addressed a letter to the general court of Massachusetts, in which he remonstrated in a firm, though courteous, tone against this oppressive policy, by which the inhabitants of Rhode Island seemed "to be devoted to the Indian shambles and massacres." A few months afterwards he wrote to the governor, Mr. Endicott, who invited him to visit Boston, that he might present his requests to the general court in person. The address he made to the court, in the name and by the appointment of his colony, was successful in obtaining some of the privileges that he had requested. This kindness he acknowledged in a brief note to the assembly, in which he says, "I do cordially promise for myself (and all I can persuade with), to study gratitude and faithfulness to your service."

During the year 1656 a number of the then new sect called Quakers arrived in Boston, and began to promulgate their doctrines. The wild fanaticism of some of the early adherents of the sect forms a striking contrast to the quiet and consistent demeanor of the Friends of the present day. Experience had not yet been sufficient to teach Massachusetts the folly of interfering between God and man, and she attempted the utter extermination of these new heretics. A

large number were fined, imprisoned, banished, and whipped, and by a sanguinary law, enacted October, 1658, punishing with death all quakers who should return into the jurisdiction after banishment, four persons were barbarously executed. The persecution continued till September, 1661, when an order was received from King Charles II. requiring that neither capital nor corporal punishment should be inflicted on them, but that offenders should be sent to England. The other colonies of New England passed severe laws against the quakers, and endeavored to prevail on Rhode Island to join in the persecution. The commissioners of the united colonies addressed a letter to the president of Rhode Island, urging him to send away such quakers as were then in the colony, and prohibit the entrance of any in future; but the government remaining true to their principle of "soul liberty," promptly refused to comply with the request. The general assembly, which met March 13, 1657, returned an answer to the commissioners in the following terms:—

"Whereas freedom of different consciences to be protected from enforcements was the principal ground of our charter, both with respect to our humble suit for it, as also to the true intent of the honorable and renowned parliament of England in granting of the same unto us,—which freedom we still prize as the greatest happiness that men can possess in this world;—therefore we shall, for the preservation of our civil peace and order, the more seriously take notice that those people and any other that are here, or shall come amongst us, be impartially required, and to our utmost consrained, to perform all civil duties requisite, towards the maintaining the right of his highness and the government of that most renowned commonwealth of England in this colony. And in case they the said people called quakers which are here, or shall come among us, do refuse to submit to the doing all

duties aforesaid, then we resolve to make use of the first opportunity to inform our agent residing in England."*

This reply was not satisfactory to the commissioners, and the next autumn they wrote again to the assembly, who returned an answer, dated October 13, 1657, in which they use the following language:—

"As concerning these quakers (so called), which are now among us, we have no law whereby to punish any for only declaring by words, &c., their minds and understandings concerning the things and ways of God, as to salvation and an eternal condition. And we find, moreover, that in those places where these people, aforesaid, in this colony, are most of all suffered to declare themselves freely, and are only opposed by arguments in discourse, there they least of all, desire to come."†

The letter then expressed disapprobation of the conduct of some of the quakers, and promised at the next general assembly that proper measures should be adopted to prevent any "bad effects of their doctrines and endeavors."

The other colonies appear to have been greatly incensed by the firm and consistent adherence of Rhode Island to the glorious principles of her founder. The commissioners wrote a third time to the general assembly, requiring the colony to unite in a general persecution of the quakers, under the penalty of being herself excluded from all commercial intercourse with the rest of New England. This extraordinary attempt to force the citizens of Rhode Island from their cherished principles was unavailing.

Apprehensive, however, that attempts might be made to accomplish this object indirectly they charged John Clarke, their agent at the court of the protector, to plead their cause that "they may not be compelled to exercise any civil power over men's consciences." The following letter to Mr.

* Colony Records. † Hutchinson, vol. i. p. 454.

Clarke was written by a committee appointed by the general assembly, November 5, 1658. It reflects great credit upon Rhode Island, and shows how far she was in advance of the other colonies and of the age:—

"Worthy Sir and trusty Friend, Mr. Clarke,—We have found not only your ability and diligence, but also your love and care to be such concerning the welfare and prosperity of this colony, since you have been entrusted with the more public affairs thereof, surpassing that no small benefit which formerly we had of your presence here at home, that we in all straits and incumbrances are emboldened to repair to you for your further and continued counsel, care and help, finding that your solid and christian demeanor hath gotten no small interest in the hearts of our superiors, those noble and worthy senators with whom you have had to do on our behalf, as it hath constantly appeared in your addresses made unto them, which we have by good and comfortable proof found, having plentiful experience thereof.

"The last year we have laden you with much employment, which we were then put upon by reason of some too refractory among ourselves, wherein we appealed unto you for your advice, for the more public manifestation of it with respect to our superiors. But our intelligence it seems fell short in that great loss of the ship, which is conceived here to be cast away. We have now a new occasion given by an old spirit, with respect to the colonies about us, who seem to be offended with us because of a sort of people called by the name of quakers, who are come amongst us, and have raised up divers who seem at present to be of their spirit, whereat the colonies about us seem to be offended with us, because the said people have their liberty amongst us, are entertained into our houses, or into any of our assemblies. And for the present we have found no just cause to charge them with the breach of civil peace, only they are constantly going forth amongst them about us, and vex and trouble them in point of their

religion and spiritual state, though they return with many a foul scar in their bodies for the same. And the offence our neighbors take against us, is because we take not some course against the said people, either to expel them from among us, or take such courses against them as themselves do, who are in fear lest their religion should be corrupted by them. Concerning which displeasure that they seem to take, it was expressed to us in a solemn letter, written by the commissioners of the united colonies at their sitting, as though they would bring us in to act according to their scantling, or else take some course to do us greater displeasure. A copy of which letter we have herewith sent unto you, wherein you may perceive how they express themselves. As also we have herewith sent our present answer unto them, to give you what light we may in this matter. There is one clause in their letter which plainly implies a threat, though covertly expressed—as their manner is—which we gather to be this: that as themselves (as we conceive) have been much awed, in point of their continued subjection to the state of England, lest, in case they should decline, England might prohibit all trade with them, both in point of exportation and importation of any commodities, which were a host sufficiently prevalent to subdue New England, as not being able to subsist; even so they seem secretly to threaten us, by cutting us off from all commerce and trade with them, and thereby to disable us of any comfortable subsistence, because that the concourse of shipping, and so of all kind of commodities, is universally conversant amongst themselves; as also knowing that ourselves are not in a capacity to send out shipping of ourselves, which is in a great measure occasioned *by their oppressing* us, as yourself well know; as in many other respects, so in this for one, that we cannot have anything from them for the supply of our necessities, but, in effect, they make the prices both of our commodities and their own also, because we have not English coin, but only that

which passeth among these barbarians, and such commodities as are raised by the labor of our hands, as corn, cattle, tobacco, &c., to make payment in, which they will have at their own rate, or else not deal with us; whereby though they gain extraordinarily by us, yet, for the safeguard of their religion, may seem to neglect themselves in that respect; for *what will not men do for their God?*

"Sir, this is our earnest and present request unto you in this matter, that as you may perceive in our answer to the united colonies, that we fly as to our refuge in all civil respects to his highness and honorable council, as not being subject to any others in matters of our civil state, so may it please you to have an eye and ear open, in case our adversaries should seek to undermine us in our privileges granted unto us, and to plead our case in such sort, as that *we may not be compelled to exercise any civil power over men's consciences, so long as human orders in point of civility are not corrupted and violated*, which our neighbors about us do frequently practise, whereof many of us have large experience, and judge it to be no less than a point of ABSOLUTE CRUELTY.

"JOHN SANFORD,
"Clerk of the Assembly."*

Thus terminated the controversy respecting the persecution of the quakers, between the commissioners of New England and the colony of Rhode Island. It commenced near the close of Williams's administration; the measures on the part of the colony were sustained by his advice and authority, and his liberal and tolerant spirit pervaded all these proceedings. He retired from the office of president in May, 1658, and it is probable he declined being a candidate for re-election, though, at intervals, for several years, he occupied a seat in the upper house of the general assembly.

* Colony Records.

Perhaps his motives were the same as those which, at a subsequent period, influenced the immortal Washington, who did not think it right that the highest office should be held for a long period by the same individual.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE KING GRANTS A NEW CHARTER—WILLIAMS APPOINTED ASSISTANT—CHARGES AGAINST RHODE ISLAND REFUTED—CONTROVERSY WITH THE QUAKERS—PHILIP'S WAR—SERVICES OF WILLIAMS.

Although Roger Williams had retired from the post of chief magistrate, yet he neglected no opportunity to promote the interests of the colony. He was appointed by his fellow-citizens of Providence to all the higher offices, and frequent and honorable mention of his name appears in the records both of the town and colony.

In the meantime, the various trials through which Rhode Island passed increased her own love of liberty, and, by the blessing of Divine Providence, she overcame all the machinations of her adversaries, both at home and abroad. Her prosperity augmented, and her inhabitants multiplied; for, to the persecuted of all denominations, she was an ark of safety.

John Clarke, who was sent with Roger Williams to England in the year 1651, still continued there, to watch over the interests of the colony. After the death of the protector, and the final subversion of the commonwealth, a commission was sent to Dr. Clarke to procure a new charter from Charles II. On the 8th of July, 1663, it was granted, and conferred full power upon the colony, the king not having even reserved to himself the right of revising the proceed-

ings. It gave her the choice of every officer, from the highest to the lowest—it authorized her to make peace and declare war—and constituted her a sovereignty, under the protection of England. This instrument, like the former charter, thus nobly embodies Rhode Island's great principle:—

"No person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anywise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion in matters of religion, who do not actually disturb the peace of our said colony; but that all and every person and persons may, from to time, and at all times hereafter, freely and fully have and enjoy his own and their judgments and consciences, in matters of religious concernments, throughout the tract of land hereafter mentioned, they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly, and not using this liberty to licentiousness and profaneness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others."

This charter, from such a source, cannot fail to awaken both admiration and astonishment. One so favorable to civil and religious liberty was never before granted by an English monarch; and it may be doubted whether, up to the present period, freedom so unlimited has even yet been bestowed by England upon any of her colonies.

The new charter was received with enthusiastic joy by the colonists. It was brought to New England by Captain George Baxter, and presented to the general court at Newport, November 24th, 1663. On the following day, it was read in "a very great meeting and assembly of the freemen of the colony." The records say, that "the said letters, with his majesty's royal stamp and the broad seal, with much beseeming gravity, were held up on high, and presented to the perfect view of the people." Thanks were voted to the king, to the earl of Clarendon, and to Dr. Clarke, their "trusty and well-beloved friend," together with a resolution to pay

all his expenses, and to present him with a hundred pounds. Thanks were also voted to Capt. Baxter, with a present of thirty pounds, besides his expenses from Boston.

By the provisions of the charter, the king appointed the first governor and assistants, who were to continue in office till the first Wednesday of May next ensuing. Roger Williams was created one of the assistants; and at the first meeting of the assembly under the new government, he was appointed to transcribe the charter into the records of the colony. In May, 1664, at the first general election held by the people, Williams was chosen an assistant; and at this session, in connexion with Dr. Clarke, was appointed to view the laws. He was also appointed one of the commissioners to fix the eastern boundary of the colony.

Such were the auspicious circumstances in which this charter went into operation; and it continued to be the fundamental law of Rhode Island for nearly one hundred and eighty years. The community prospered under its rule; and when it was supplanted in 1843, by the present constitution, it was the oldest charter of civil government in existence.

> "There into life an infant empire springs!
> There falls the iron from the soul:
> There liberty's young accents roll
> Up to the King of kings!"

Two charges have been brought against Rhode Island, which claim here a passing remark. The first is made by an English writer,* who states, that at the meeting of the general assembly, in March, 1664, a law was passed, containing the following passage:—"That all men *professing christianity*, of competent estates, and of civil conversation, who acknowledge and are obedient to the civil magistrates, though of different judgments in religious affairs, *Roman*

* Chalmer's Political Annals, book i. c. 11, pp. 276-279.

Catholics only excepted, shall be admitted freemen, or may choose or be chosen colonial officers."

Such an act would have been an anomaly in the legislation of Rhode Island, and a serious reflection upon the character of Roger Williams and the colony. It is certain that no law containing the clauses above-written in italics was passed in 1664: nor can such a law be found in the records of the state, from its first settlement to the present time. The Hon. Samuel Eddy, who was secretary of state in Rhode Island from 1797 to 1819, and who examined the records with the utmost care, and with a particular view to this law, declares that he could find "nothing that has any reference to it, nor anything that gives any preference or privileges to men of one set of religious opinions over those of another."*

This testimony, while alone sufficient to disprove the allegation, is abundantly confirmed by the fact, that the very next year—in May, 1665—the legislature asserted, that "liberty to all persons as to the worship of God had been a principle maintained in the colony from the beginning thereof; and it was much in their hearts to preserve the same liberty for ever."

The commissioners from England, also, who visited Rhode Island the same year, reported of its people:—"They allow liberty of conscience to all who live civilly; they admit of all religions."†

Again, in 1680, the legislature declared:—"We leave every man to walk as God persuades his heart; all our people enjoy freedom of conscience." It is, moreover, utterly incredible that they would enact a law at variance with all their institutions, and which would have been a violation of the charter. It conflicts with all their previous and subsequent policy, and especially with the principles of Williams, who, in his Hireling Ministry, says:—"All these consciences

* For a full statement of Mr. Eddy's views, see Walsh's Appeal, pp. 427—435.

† Hutch. Coll. p. 413.

(yea, the very conscience of papists, jews, &c., as I have proved at large in answer to Mr. Cotton's washings), ought freely and impartially to be permitted their several respective worships, their ministers of worships, and what way of maintaining them they please."

Judge Eddy accounts for the existence of the words in italics, found in the copy of the laws printed in 1745, by supposing they were inserted without authority by a revising committee, who might be desirous to please the government of England. It may be added, that in this very year, 1745, great alarm was created in the mother country at the prospect of the re-introduction of popery, in connexion with the invasion of the pretender. The words, *professing christianity*, and *Roman catholics only excepted*, are now regarded, by all who have carefully examined the subject, as an interpolation.*

The other charge is, that, in 1665, the quakers were outlawed for refusing to bear arms.† This statement has also been proved to be as destitute of truth as the former by Judge Eddy, in an article contained in the Massachusetts Historical Collections, 2nd series, vol. vii. p. 97. From this article, it appears that the commissioners of the king required, in his name, "that all householders, inhabiting this colony, take the oath of allegiance," the penalty for refusal being, a forfeiture of the elective franchise. The general as-

*At the time Judge Eddy wrote, there were no copies of the printed digests of 1719 and 1730, in the Secretary's office. Since then, copies of these digests have been found, and the paragraph referred to is inserted in both. Still, the main part of Judge Eddy's defence, remains unaffected, as the words relating to *Roman Catholics* are not to be found in the records.

It should be recollected that the first digest of 1719, was not printed until 55 years after the passage of the law, and that, previous to this, the law had never been in print. It is also known, that several of the early digests of laws were prepared by committees, and were probably never revised by the Legislature. Only four copies of the digest of 1719 are now known to be in existence.

† See an article signed Francis Brimley, in Mass. Hist. Coll. vol. v. p 216, whose statement is repeated in Holmes's American Annals, vol. i. p. 341

sembly replied, that it had been the uniform practice of the colony, from respect to the rights of conscience, to allow those who objected to an oath to make an engagement, on the penalties of perjury. An engagement was accordingly drawn up, in which the individual promised to bear allegiance to the king and his successors, and "to yield due obedience to the laws established from time to time." To the latter part of this engagement the quakers objected, because they conceived it would bind them to conform to the militia laws. The colony had not power to dispense with the king's ordinance; but the form of the engagement was altered the very next year, to meet their scruples; and the year following, one of their number was elected deputy-governor.

It may be proper here to give a brief account of Roger Williams's famous controversy with the quakers, which is contained in the last of his published writings. It was an unhappy dispute, in which all parties displayed more zeal than christian charity; and the result probably tended to irritate rather than to convince. We must, however, honor the motives by which Williams was actuated, and which he declares to have been a desire to vindicate the name of God from the dishonor brought upon it by the quakers—to justify the colony for receiving them when banished from the other colonies—and to bear public testimony, that, while he was decidedly opposed to any measures which would impair liberty of conscience, he disapproved of the doctrines and practices of that sect. Rhode Island, being the refuge of these persons, was charged with approving principles and conduct injurious to the morals and order of society. These remarks must not be understood as applying in the slightest degree to the estimable society of Friends as they exist at the present day, for none would repudiate more sincerely than they the fanatical extravagances of some of the adherents of George Fox, at that period, in New England.

In the month of July, 1672, Williams took occasion, when

the distinguished founder of the sect was in Rhode Island, to propose that the principles of the quakers should be examined in a friendly debate. Such public disputes were not uncommon in that age, but they cannot be regarded as a test of truth, and have seldom proved beneficial in demolishing error. Williams sent fourteen propositions to Fox, at Newport; but, from some cause, they were not delivered till thirteen days after the date, and the latter left for England without having seen them.

A discussion, however, was commenced with three of his disciples at Newport; and continued there, and at Providence, for four days, where it terminated, having produced no change of opinion on either side.

Williams afterwards published an account of this debate, which bears the following quaint title: "George Fox digged out of his Burrowes; or, an Offer of Disputation on Fourteen Proposals, made this last Summer, 1672 (so-called), unto G. Fox, then present on Rhode Island, in New England. By R. W." It is a small quarto volume of 327 pages, and displays considerable learning and acuteness, but is distinguished by an acerbity of language not found in his other writings. This dispute naturally gave umbrage to some of that sect for a time; but there were others who cherished for him the highest esteem, among whom was Joseph Jenckes, a subsequent governor of Rhode Island, who bestows a merited eulogy on Williams as a man and a christian.

He had now reached the appointed bourne of human life; but his physical and mental powers remained vigorous, and circumstances occurred about this time which called forth all his energies. Massassoit, the principal sachem of the Pokanokets, and the friend of the English, now slept with his fathers, and his son, Philip, succeeded him as chief over the allied tribes. He was able and ambitious, and endeavored to establish a league among the Indians, in New England, in order to arrest the progress of the whites, or drive them from

the land of his fathers. While Philip was making preparation for war, in 1671, the governor of Plymouth and the commissioners invited him to meet them at Taunton. The haughty chieftain, suspicious of their design, refused; and demanded that they should come to him. In this posture of affairs, Williams, with a Mr. Brown, offered to become a hostage in Philip's camp. He then acceded to the above request, delivered up about seventy guns, and promised future fidelity. This event, through the successful agency of Williams, gave the colony four years to prepare for the impending conflict. He exerted himself, also, to prevent the powerful tribe of the Narragansetts from joining the league. They at first promised neutrality, and renewed their treaty with the colonies; but they afterwards united themselves to Philip, and rushed, with their four thousand warriors, to the final struggle.

In June 1675, the chief of the Pokanokets commenced a war against Plymouth colony, that soon spread terror and devastation to almost every settlement of New England. It lasted more than a year, and for a time threatened the extermination of her colonies. About six hundred men, the flower of her strength, fell in battle or were butchered by the savages; twelve or thirteen towns were utterly destroyed; six hundred dwelling houses reduced to ashes: and the expense and loss equalled in value half a million of dollars. It was the most distressing period the country had ever seen, and almost every family lost some relative in this calamitous war.

On this occasion, for the first time, Rhode Island became exposed to the hostility of the Indians. Many of the inhabitants of Providence, and of the other towns of the colony, removed to the island for safety. Williams, however, remained at home, and exerted his wonted energy. He accepted a commission as captain in the militia, and displayed his patriotic valor by buckling on his armor for the defence

of his fellow-citizens. He also presented a petition to the town of Providence, for leave to convert one of the houses into a garrison, and to erect other defences "for the safety of the women and children."

It is said, that when the Indians appeared on the heights north of the town, Williams took his staff, and fearlessly went forth to meet them, hoping, as on former occasions, to appease their vengeance. Some of the old warriors advanced from the main body to meet him, with whom he remonstrated. He admonished them of the power and vengeance of the English. "Massachusetts," said he, "can raise thousands of men at this moment, and if you kill them, the king of England will supply their places as fast as they fall." "Well," answered one of the chieftains, "let them come. We are ready for them. But as for you, brother Williams, you are a good man. You have been kind to us many years. Not a hair of your head shall be touched."* Finding their young warriors could not be restrained, he returned to the garrison. The Indians subsequently entered the town and destroyed by fire thirty deserted habitations; but it does not appear that any persons were killed. In one of the houses the records were deposited, which were preserved by being thrown into the Mooshausick, from whence they were afterwards recovered, though much injured.

This conflict was brought to a close, by the death of Philip, in August, 1676. The Pokanokets were nearly exterminated, and of the once powerful Narragansetts hardly one hundred men remained. In the wars of the New England colonists with the Indians, the candid historian will find much both to regret and condemn; but it is due to the memory of the pilgrims to state, that those hostilities were first commenced by the savages, and when the struggle came, it was a contest for life or death. We cannot fail to recognize the

* Baylies' Hist. of Plymouth, vol. iii. p. 314. Thatcher's Indian Biography, vol. i. p. 309.

hand of an All-wise Providence in preserving the colonists during their infant state from such a general league of the natives, which, had it been formed at that period, must have resulted in their utter extermination.

In May, 1677, Roger Williams was again elected a member of the upper house of the colonial assembly, but he declined the office. He continued, however, to watch with parental solicitude over the affairs of the colony, and was their counsellor in all emergencies. He was especially sensitive to any departure from those great principles which are essential to civil government as well as religious liberty. A few factious persons raised objections to the payment of the necessary taxes, which induced him to present to his fellow-citizens the following paper, entitled *Considerations touching Rates*, many of which may be regarded as valuable civil maxims:—

"I. Government and order in families, towns, &c., is the ordinance of the Most High (Rom. xiii.) for the peace and good of mankind.

"II. Six things are written in the hearts of all mankind, yea, even in pagans: 1st, That there is a Deity; 2nd, That some actions are naught; 3rd, That the Deity will punish; 4th, That there is another life; 5th, That marriage is honorable; 6th, That mankind cannot keep together without some government.

"III. There is no Englishman in his majesty's dominions or elsewhere, who is not forced to submit to government.

"IV. There is not a man in the world, except robbers, pirates, and rebels, but doth submit to government.

"V. Even robbers, pirates, and rebels themselves cannot hold together, but by some law among themselves and government.

"VI. One of these two great laws in the world must prevail,—either that of judges and justices of peace in courts of peace, or the law of arms, the sword and blood.

"VII. If it comes from the courts of trials of peace, to the trial of the sword and blood, the conquered is forced to seek law and government.

"VIII. Till matters come to a settled government, no man is ordinarily sure of his house, goods, lands, cattle, wife, children, or life.

"IX. Hence is that ancient maxim, *It is better to live under a tyrant in peace, than under the sword, or where every man is a tyrant.*

"X. His majesty sends governors to Barbadoes, Virginia, &c., but to us he shows greater favor in our charter, to choose whom we please.

"XI. No charters are obtained without great suit, favor, or charges. Our first cost a hundred pounds (though I never received it all); our second about a thousand; Connecticut about six thousand, &c.

"XII. No government is maintained without tribute, custom, rates, taxes, &c.

"Our charter excels all in New England, or *in the world, as to the souls of men.*

"XIV. It pleased God (Rom. xiii.) to command tribute, custom, and consequently rates, not only for fear, but for conscience sake.

"XV. Our rates are the least, by far, of any colony in New England.

"XVI. There is no man that hath a vote in town or colony, but *he hath a hand in making the rates by himself or his deputies.*

"XVII. In our colony, the general assembly, governor, magistrates, deputies, towns, town-clerks, raters, constables, &c., have done their duties; the failing lies upon particular persons.

"XVIII. It is but folly to resist: (one or more, and if one, why not more?) God hath stirred up the spirit of the governor, magistrates, and officers, driven to it by necessity,

to be unanimously resolved to see the matter finished; and it is the duty of every man to maintain, encourage, and strengthen the hand of authority.

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"*Providence*, 15*th Jan.* 1681."

On all questions of civil polity, the views of Williams were enlarged, and decidedly in favor of the rights of the people. He frequently states them in such passages as the following:—"Kings and magistrates must be considered invested with no more power than the people betrust them with." "The sovereign power of all civil authority is founded in the consent of the people."* Though he sympathized with the popular party in the contests of that age, and was on terms of friendship with many of its distinguished leaders, yet he expressed his disapprobation of some of their measures. His own colony was a republic, established on the broadest foundations of individual freedom; but he was always a loyal subject of the government at home, whether administered by king, parliament, or protector. A firm friend to law and order, he sought the essential spirit of liberty in whatever form it was enshrined.

* "Bloudy Tenent," pp. 116, 243.

CHAPTER XVII.

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE COLONY—WILLIAMS'S RELIGIOUS OPINIONS—HIS LABORS AS A MINISTER—HIS LETTER TO GOVERNOR BRADSTREET—HIS DEATH.

In tracing the remarkable course of the subject of our narrative, from the period of the establishment of his colony, we have confined ourselves to those political and social events in which he was the prime actor; but it must not be supposed that he ever merged the character of the minister and Indian missionary in that of the legislator. We will now advert to ecclesiastical affairs, and to the religious opinions and practice of Williams.

He has left us no account himself of the manner in which public worship was maintained at Providence; but we learn from Governor Winthrop and others, that, on his first arrival, he was accustomed to preach both on the Sabbath and on week-days. In pleasant weather the congregation are said to have assembled under the shades of the forest, and at other times, being few in number, they were accommodated in a private habitation. There is no evidence of any immediate ecclesiastical organization, but some of the inhabitants had been members of the church at Salem, and probably still regarded Williams as their pastor. As there was a diversity of religious opinions among the people, he may have judged it most conducive to the harmony of his little colony, at first

to collect the whole into one assembly, until the number should have increased, so as to enable them to form separate societies in accordance with their own views.

In the course of two or three years, the settlement received many accessions from the neighboring colonies and from England, and some of these persons were inclined to the opinions of the baptists. Williams embraced the same views, but it was not easy for him to submit himself to the ordinance as usually administered, there being no baptist minister in New England. Under these circumstances, Ezekiel Holliman, a pious and gifted individual, who afterwards became a minister, was selected to baptize Roger Williams, and the latter then administered the ordinance to Mr. Holliman and ten others. Few persons in the present day, not wedded to sacerdotalism, will, under the peculiar circumstances, condemn this proceeding of Williams and his friends. They placed the essential value of gospel ordinances not in the official character of the administrator, but in the spirit of the recipient.

At that time prophecy was a favorite study with many good men, a predilection for which has always characterised periods of religious or political excitement. The inquiries of Williams appear to have taken the same direction; and he fell into the too common error of deriving the principles of the christian church from the prophetic writings. Thus imaginative interpretations usurped the place of the rules and precedents of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles. He adopted the opinion, that the entire church had so far departed from its primitive constitution, that the triumph of Christ's kingdom could not be expected until a new dispensation, resembling the apostolic, should arise. As, however, little dependence can be placed on the prejudiced statements of his opponents, our readers must judge of his views from his own expositions, in the following passages, from his writings. In his "Bloudy Tenent" he says: "Thousands and

ten thousands, yea, the whole generation of the righteous, who (since the falling away from the first primitive state or worship) have and do err fundamentally concerning the true matter, constitution, gathering, and governing of the church, and yet far be it from any pious breast to imagine that they are not saved, and that their souls are not bound up in the bundle of eternal life."* In his "Hireling Ministry" he observes: "In the poor small span of my life I desired to have been a diligent and constant observer, and have been myself in many ways engaged, in city, in country, in court, in schools, in universities, in churches, in Old and New England, and yet, cannot, in the holy presence of God, bring in the result of a satisfying discovery, that either the begetting ministry of the apostles to the nations, or the feeding and nourishing ministry of pastors and teachers, according to the first institutions of the Lord Jesus, are yet restored and extant."† In his opinion, the only ministry which existed was that of prophets—*i. e.*, teachers whose duty it was to explain religious truths and bear witness against error. In a passage of the same work he says: "The apostolical commission and ministry is long since interrupted and discontinued; yet ever since the beast antichrist arose, the Lord hath stirred up the ministry of prophecy, who must continue their witness and prophecy until their witness be finished, and slaughters, probably near approaching, be accomplished."

These peculiar opinions, however, could not extinguish his zeal for the conversion of men; and in this, as well as in other instances, we may observe, that if he was sometimes led astray by the speculations of his head, he was restored to the right path by the warmth of his heart. We have no evidence that, after this period, he ever became officially connected with any church. If, indeed, there had been no other obstacle, his engrossing occupations in the general af-

* Bloudy Tenent of Persecution, p. 20.
† Hireling Ministry none of Christ's, p. 4.

fairs of the colony would have rendered it unsuitable. From his first settlement in Providence, however, to the close of his life, he continued frequently to preach the gospel to the ignorant and destitute around him. He made laudable attempts to instruct the Narragansett Indians; and, when he was more than three-score years and ten, continued his monthly visits to preach to them and the English in that district. A tribe of these Indians, called the Nianticks, were objects of his peculiar care, and they would listen to him when they would hear no one else. They were so far influenced by his ministerial labors that they took no part in Philip's war. A remnant of this once powerful people still continue to reside in their original place of abode, in the south-west part of Rhode Island, on lands settled upon them by the state, where, civilized and christianized, they remain a living monument of the zeal and benevolence of Roger Williams.

When very near the close of his life, he occupied his leisure in preparing the discourses which he had delivered during his missionary efforts, as will appear from the following letter. It derives peculiar interest from being the last production of his pen which has been preserved:

"To my much-honored, kind friend, the Governor Bradstreet, at Boston.

"*Providence, May 6th*, 1682.

"Sir,—This enclosed tells you that, being old and weak, and bruised (with rupture and colic), and lameness on both my feet, I am directed, by the Father of our spirits, to desire to attend his infinite Majesty with a poor mite (which makes but two farthings). By my fire-side I have recollected the discourses which (by many tedious journeys), I have had with the scattered English at Narragansett, before the war and since. I have reduced them unto those twenty-two heads (enclosed), which is near thirty sheets of my writing.

I would send them to the Narragansetts and others: there is no controversy in them; only an endeavor of a particular match of each poor sinner to his Maker. For [the expense of] printing, I am forced to write to my friends at Massachusetts, Connecticut, Plymouth, and our own colony, that he that hath a shilling and a heart to countenance such a soul work may trust the great Paymaster (who is beforehand with us already) for an hundredth for one in this life. . . .

"Sir, I shall humbly wait for your advice where it may be best printed—at Boston or Cambridge—and for how much, the printer finding paper. We have tidings here of Shaftsbury's and Howard's beheading—and, contrarily, their release; London manifestations of joy; and the king's calling a parliament. But all these are but sublunaries, temporaries, and trivials. Eternity, O eternity! is our business; to which end I am most unworthy to be

"Your willing and faithful servant,

"ROGER WILLIAMS.

"My humble respects to Mrs. Bradstreet, and other honored friends."

The preceding letter affords additional proof of the writer's disinterested benevolence and self-denying spirit. With ample opportunities of enriching himself—to use the words of his son—"he gave away his lands and other estate to them that he thought were most in want, until he gave away all."* His property, his time, and his talents, were devoted to the promotion of the temporal and spiritual welfare of mankind, and in conducting to a glorous issue the struggle to unloose "the bonds of the captive daughter of Zion."

The last public act of Williams was to sign a document, which bears date January 16, 1683, settling a dispute relative to the boundaries between the Providence lands and those of an adjacent township.

* Letter of Daniel Williams to the town of Providence, dated August 24 1710.

Having now accompanied this great man through all the events of his remarkable career—from his youth until the last year of his life—we should rejoice to go with him, step by step, through the brief remainder of his pilgrimage—to listen to the accumulated wisdom of years—to hear his admonitions to his children, and to his fellow-citizens—his estimate of the importance of the great principles for which he had contended, in the near view of the final judgment—and of his triumphant faith, as he stood upon the brink of the river of death; but on these points history is silent. We are furnished only with a brief record of his death, related in a manner which would lead us to suppose he was spared the sufferings of lengthened illness, and called rather suddenly from his long service to his eternal reward. On the 10th of the following May, Mr. John Thornton, of Providence, wrote to the Rev. Samuel Hubbard of Boston:—"The Lord hath arrested by death our ancient and approved friend, Mr. Roger Williams, with divers others here." "He was buried," says Callender, "with all the solemnity the colony was able to show." His remains were interred in a spot which he himself had selected, on his own land, a short distance from the place where, forty-seven years before, he first set his foot in the wilderness. He had nearly attained four score, being in the seventy-eighth year of his age. His excellent wife survived him, and, as far as can be ascertained, the whole of his family, consisting of six children. His lineal descendants are numerous, and may justly rejoice in the diffusion alike of the fame and of the principles of their ancestor.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GENERAL ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER—SPREAD OF HIS GREAT PRINCIPLE—CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

HAVING, in the preceding pages, made Williams, to a great extent, his own biographer, an elaborate portraiture here is unnecessary. The reader must have observed in his character that harmony between the mental and moral qualities which is essential to true greatness, and to the influence necessary for a reformer; since the virtues of the man will predispose to the favorable reception of his new opinions. The powers of his mind were strong and original; and what he accomplished in the sphere he occupied, sufficiently indicates what he might have done on a larger theatre. His writings manifest a lively imagination and vigorous reasoning powers; and though his style is disfigured by the defects common to the period, it occasionally rises into beauty and eloquence.

His moral qualities were of the highest order. Inflexible integrity, undaunted courage, and prompt decision, marked all his conduct. In his pecuniary transactions, his disinterestedness was carried to an extreme, since he may be said to have given to his fellow-citizens valuable tracts of land, which strictly belonged to himself and his family. Every man, of whatever clime, or color, or condition, he regarded as a brother. In all the relations of domestic and social life, his conduct was most exemplary.

Over his whole course his piety shed a hallowed lustre. In him it was a permanent, living principle, as his publications and letters abundantly prove. In this testimony his friends and his opponents unite. Even the prejudiced Cotton Mather confesses, that "in many things he acquitted himself so laudably, that many judicious persons judged him to have had the root of the matter in him." Hubbard, who was a contemporary, says, "Mr. Williams was a godly and zealous preacher." Callender, one of the best authorities on this subject, observes, "Mr. Williams appears, by the whole course and tenor of his life and conduct here, to have been one of the most disinterested men that ever lived—a most pious and heavenly-minded soul." His forgiving spirit; his fervent devotion; his energetic, vigilant, and untiring efforts in the cause of humanity, demonstrate that he was an eminent christian. We may regard it is an additional evidence of his consistent piety, that the only charge his opponents have brought against him was a fondness for new opinions, which they have employed in order to discredit his great principle—the supremacy of conscience. Now it is of great importance, in estimating religious character, to inquire whether a man changes his *principles*, or only his opinions on non-essential points. If he is continually sliding off from the basis of faith and salvation, even though he at last return to saving truth, our confidence in the soundness of his head and heart must be shaken. But this was not the case with Wiliams. From the beginning to the end of his course he never swerved from the great evangelical doctrines of the gospel, defending them by his writings, and illustrating them by the appropriate fruits of a holy life.

With respect to changes of opinion, one of two things must be admitted; either that all christians have received the whole of scriptural truth already, or that, in attaining to it, they must give up some old opinions. Those men of penetrating understandings, who have been led to renounce

error and to discover new truths, have rarely avoided mingling some chaff with the wheat, of which we many examples at the Reformation. The subject of this narrative, like most men of an ardent and speculative temperament, sometimes pushed his reasonings so far as to lead to false conclusions; but he was a sincere lover of truth, and nothing could prevent him from carrying out his earnest convictions.

That noble principle, which is the pillar of his fame, has now been sufficiently tested. More than two centuries have elapsed since his colony was founded. It has passed from the protection of England to an independent state, forming an integral part of a great republic; but in all changes it has preserved religious freedom unimpaired. In Rhode Island, no man has ever been molested on account of his religious opinions; and civil officers, from the highest to the lowest, have been chosen without regard to denomination. The happy results have been apparent in the harmony existing among the different sects, as well as in the liberal support given to public worship and to religious institutions. In no part of the world is the proportion of churches to the population greater than in this state.

English travellers who have spoken favorably of the example presented in the New World of religion, unsupported by the state, have frequently qualified their approbation on the ground that the experiment has been too short to afford conclusive evidence. Probably many of these gentlemen did not know that there was one state, at least, to which this objection cannot apply. *Two hundred and sixteen years* are, surely, long enough to judge of the results of any system. Protestantism itself can boast of only one century more!

It has proved to be an expansive system. The leaven, at first hidden in one small territory, gradually extended itself until Virginia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and other states, where episcopalianism or congregationalism was established by law, were penetrated by its influence. The last link

which bound religion to the state was burst asunder by Massachusetts in 1833, and every part of the union has now adopted that great truth which occasioned the persecution and banishment of Roger Williams.

Thus his principles have received a wide illustration, and his name its noblest memorial. And when the system of Rhode Island shall spread over the whole of Christendom, as we believe it is destined to do, the founder of that state will be remembered as one of its chief confessors. The approach of that period is indicated by the signs of the times; and every Christian should endeavor, by effort and prayer, to accelerate its progress. It will be the harbinger of that long-expected and glorious era, when anti-christ in all its forms shall fall, and the triumphs of the church of Christ be universal and complete!

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.—(P. 49.)

An extract from the following letter has already been given in the work. The remainder is here added, as presenting some interesting traits in the character of Williams, as well as of the circumstances of the colonies. Major Mason was distinguished for his services in the Pequod war. He was major-general of the Connecticut forces, deputy-governor of that colony, &c.

"*Providence, June* 22, 1670.

"Major Mason,—My honored, dear, and ancient friend, my due respects and earnest desires to God for your eternal peace, &c.

"I crave your leave and patience to present you with some few considerations, occasioned by the late transactions between your colony and ours. The last year you were pleased, in one of your lines to me, to tell me that you longed to see my face once more before you died. I embraced your love, though I feared my old lame bones, and yours, had arrested travelling in this world, and therefore I was, and am, ready to lay hold, on all occasions, of writing, as I do at present.

"The occasion, I confess, is sorrowful, because I see yourselves, with others, embarked in a resolution to invade and

despoil your poor countrymen in a wilderness, and your ancient friends of our temporal and soul liberties.

"It is sorrowful, also, because mine eye beholds a black and doleful train of grievous, and, I fear, bloody consequences at the heel of this business, both to you and us. The Lord is righteous in all our afflictions,—that is a maxim; the Lord is gracious to all oppressed,—that is another; he is most gracious to the soul that cries and waits on him; that is silver, tried in the fire, seven times.

"Sir, I am not out of hopes but that, while your aged eyes and mine are yet in their orbs, we shall leave our friends and countrymen, our children and relations, and this land, in peace behind us. To this end, sir, please you, with a calm, and steady, and a christian hand, to hold the balance, and to weigh these few considerations, in much love and due respect presented. . . . .

"When, the next year after my banishment, the Lord drew the bow of the Pequod war against the country, in which, sir, the Lord made yourself, with others, a blessed instrument of peace, to all New England, I had my share of service to the whole land in that Pequod business, inferior to very few that acted. . . . .

"I marched up with General Stoughton and the English forces to the Narragansett sachems, and brought my countrymen, and the barbarians, sachems and captains, to a mutual confidence and complacency, each in other.

"Though I was ready to have marched further, yet, upon agreement that I should keep at Providence, as an agent between the bay and the army, I returned, and was interpreter and intelligencer, constantly receiving and sending letters to the governor and council at Boston, &c., in which work I judge it no impertinent digression to recite (out of the many scores of letters, at times, from Mr. Winthrop), this one pious and heavenly prophecy, touching all New England, of that gallant man; viz., 'If the Lord turn away

his face from our sins, and bless our endeavors and yours, at this time against our bloody enemy, we and our children shall long enjoy peace in this our wilderness condition.' And himself and some other of the council motioned, and it was debated, whether or no I had not merited, not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some remark of favor. It is known who hindered, who never promoted, the liberty of other men's consciences. These things, and ten times more, I could relate, to show that I am not a stranger to the Pequod wars and lands, and possibly not far from the merit of a foot of land in either country which I have not.

"Considering (upon frequent exceptions against Providence men) that we had no authority for civil government, I went purposely to England, and upon my report and petition the parliament granted us a charter of government for these parts, so judged vacant on all hands. And upon this, the country about us was more friendly, and wrote to us, and treated us as an authorized colony; only the difference of our consciences much obstructed. The bounds of this our first charter, I (having occular knowledge of persons, places, and transactions) did honestly and conscientiously, as in the holy presence of God, draw up from Pawcatuck river, which I then believed, and still do, is free from all English claims and conquests; for although there were some Pequods on this side the river, who, by reason of some sachems' marriages with some on this side, lived in a kind of neutrality with both sides, yet, upon the breaking out of the war, they relinquished their land to the possession of their enemies, the Narragansetts and Nianticks, and their land never came into the condition of the lands on the other side, which the English, by conquest, challenged; so that I must still affirm, as in God's holy presence, I tenderly waived to touch a foot of land in which I knew the Pequod wars were maintained and were properly Pequod, being a gallant country; and from

Pawcatuck river hitherward, being but a patch of ground, full of troublesome inhabitants, I did, as I judged, inoffensively, draw our poor and inconsiderable line.

"It is true, when at Portsmouth, on Rhode Island, some of ours, in a general assembly, motioned their planting on this side Pawcatuck. I, hearing that some of the Massachusetts reckoned this land theirs, by conquest, dissuaded from the motion, until the matter should be amicably debated and composed; for though I questioned not our right, &c., yet I feared it would be inexpedient and offensive, and procreative of these heats and fires, to the dishonoring of the king's majesty, and the dishonoring and blaspheming of God and of religion in the eyes of the English and barbarians about us.

"Some time after the Pequod war and our charter from the parliament, the government of Massachusetts wrote to myself (then chief officer in this colony), of their receiving of a patent from the parliament for these vacant lands, as an addition to the Massachusetts, &c., and thereupon requesting me to exercise no more authority, &c., for, they wrote, their charter was granted some few weeks before ours. I returned, what I believe, righteous and weighty, to the hands of my true friend, Mr. Winthrop, the first mover of my coming into these parts, and to that answer of mine I never received the least reply; only it is certain that, at Mr. Gorton's complaint against the Massachusetts, the lord high admiral, president, said openly, in a full meeting of the commissioners, that he knew no other charter for these parts than what Mr. Williams had obtained, and he was sure that charter, which the Massachusetts Englishmen pretended, had never passed the table.

"Upon our humble address by our agent, Mr. Clarke, to his majesty, and his gracious promise of renewing our former charter, Mr. Winthrop, upon some mistake, had entrenched upon our line, and not only so, but, as it is said, upon the

lines of other charters also. Upon Mr. Clarke's complaint your grant was called in again, and it had never been returned; but upon a report that the agents, Mr. Winthrop and Mr. Clarke, were agreed, by mediation of friends (and, it is true, they came to a solemn agreement, under hands and seals), which agreement was never violated on our part.

"But the king's majesty sending his commissioners (among other of his royal purposes) to reconcile the differences of, and to settle the bounds between, the colonies, yourselves know how the king himself, therefore, hath given a decision to this controversy. Accordingly, the king's majesty's aforesaid commissioners at Rhode Island (where, as a commissioner for this colony, I transacted with them, as did also commissioners from Plymouth), they composed a controversy between Plymouth and us, and settled the bounds between us, in which we rest.

"However you satisfy yourselves with the Pequod conquest; with the sealing of your charter some few weeks before ours; with the complaints of particular men to your colony; yet, upon a due and serious examination of the matter, in the sight of God, you will find the business at bottom to be,

"1. A depraved appetite after the great vanities, dreams, and shadows of this vanishing life, great portions of land, land in this wilderness, as if men were in as great necessity and danger for want of great portions of land, as poor, hungry, thirsty seaman have, after a sick and stormy, a long and starving passage. This is one of the Gods of New England, which the living and most high Eternal will destroy and famish.

"2. An unneighborly and unchristian intrusion upon us, as being the weaker, contrary to your laws as well as ours, concerning purchases of lands without the consent of the general court. This I told Major Atherton, at his first going up to the Narragansett about this business. I refused all

their proffers of land, and refused to interpret for them to the sachems.

"3. From these violations and intrusions arise the complaint of many privateers, not dealing as they would be dealt with, according to law of nature,—the law of the prophets and Christ Jesus,—complaining against others in a design, when they themselves are delinquents and wrong-doers. I could aggravate this many ways with scripture rhetoric and similitudes, but I see need of anodynes (as physicians speak) and not of irritations. Only this I must crave leave to say, that it looks like a prodigy or monster, that countrymen among savages in a wilderness—that professors of God, and of one Mediator, and of an eternal life, and that this is like a dream—should not be content with those vast and large tracts which all the other colonies have (like platters and tables full of dainties), but pull and snatch away their poor neighbors' bit or crust; and a crust it is, and a dry, hard one, too, because of the natives' continued troubles, trials, and vexations.

"Alas! sir, in calm, midnight thoughts, what are these leaves and flowers, and smoke and shadows, and dreams of earthly nothings, about which we poor fools and children, as David saith, disquiet ourselves in vain? Alas! what is all the scuffling of this world for, but, *come, will you smoke it?* What are all the contentions and wars of this world about, generally, but for greater dishes and bowls of porridge, of which, if we believe God's Spirit in Scripture, Esau and Jacob were types? Esau will part with the heavenly birthright for his supping, after his hunting, for god belly; and Jacob will part with his porridge for an eternal inheritance. O Lord, give me to make Jacob's and Mary's choice, which shall never be taken from me.

"How much sweeter is the counsel of the Son of God, to mind, first, the matters of his kingdom,—to take no care for o-morrow,—to pluck out, cut off, and fling away, right eyes,

hands, and feet, rather than to be cast whole into hell-fire; to consider the ravens and the lilies, whom a heavenly Father so clothes and feeds; and the counsel of his servant Paul, to roll our cares, for this life also, upon the most high Lord, steward of his people, the eternal God; to be content with food and raiment; to mind not our own, but every man the things of another; yea, and to suffer wrong, and part with that we judge is right, yea, our lives, and (as poor women-martyrs have said) as many as there be hairs upon our heads, for the name of God and the Son of God his sake. This is humanity, yea, this is christianity. The rest is but formality and picture, courteous idolatry, and Jewish and Popish blasphemy against the christian religion, the Father of spirits, and his Son the Lord Jesus. Besides, sir, the matter with us is not about these children's toys of land, meadows, cattle, government, &c. But here, all over this colony, a great number of weak and distressed souls, scattered, are flying hither from Old and New England, the Most High and Only Wise hath, in his infinite wisdom, provided this country and this corner as a shelter for the poor and persecuted, according to their several persuasions. And thus that heavenly man, Mr. Haynes, governor of Connecticut, though he pronounced the sentence of my long banishment against me, at Cambridge, then Newtown, yet said unto me, in his own house at Hartford, being then in some difference with the Bay: 'I think, Mr. Williams, I must now confess to you, that the most wise God hath provided and cut out this part of his world for a refuge and receptacle for all sorts of consciences. I am now under a cloud, and my brother Hooker, with the Bay, as you have been; we have removed from them thus far, and yet they are not satisfied.'

"Thus, sir, the king's majesty, though his father's and his own conscience favored lord bishops, which their father and grandfather King James—whom I have spoke with—sore against his will, also did, yet all the world may see, by his

majesty's declarations and engagements before his return, and his declarations and parliament speeches since, and many suitable actings, how the Father of spirits hath mightily impressed and touched his royal spirit, though the bishops much disturbed him, with deep inclination of favor and gentleness to different consciences and apprehensions, as to the invisible King and way of his worship. Hence he hath vouchsafed his royal promise under his hand and broad seal, that no person in this colony shall be molested or questioned for the matters of his conscience to God, so he be loyal and keep the civil peace. Sir, we must part with lives and land before we part with such a jewel. I judge you may yield some land and the government of it to us, and we, for peace sake, the like to you, as being but subjects to one king, &c., and I think the king's majesty would thank us, for many reasons. But to part with this jewel, we may as soon do it as the Jews with the favor of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes. Yourselves pretend liberty of conscience, but, alas! it is but self, the great god self, only to yourselves. The king's majesty winks at Barbadoes, where Jews, and all sorts of Christian and antichristian persuasions are free; but our grant, some few weeks after yours sealed, though granted as soon, if not before yours, is crowned with the king's extraordinary favor to this colony, as being a banished one, in which his majesty declared himself that he would experiment, whether civil government could consist with such liberty of conscience. This his majesty's grant was startled at by his majesty's high officers of state, who were to view it in course before the sealing; but, fearing the lion's roaring, they couched, against their wills, in obedience to his majesty's pleasure.

"Some of yours, as I heard lately, told tales to the archbishop of Canterbury; viz., that we are a profane people, and do not keep the Sabbath, but some do plough, &c. But, first, you told him not how we suffer freely all other persuasions, yea, the common prayer, which yourselves will not

suffer. If you say you will, you confess you must suffer more, as we do.

"2. You know this is but a color to your design, for, first, you know that all England itself (after the formality and superstition of morning and evening prayer) play away their Sabbath. 2nd. You know yourselves do not keep the Sabbath, that is, the seventh day, &c.

"3. You know that famous Calvin, and thousands more, held it but ceremonial and figurative, from Colossians ii., &c., and vanished; and that the day of worship was alterable at the church's pleasure. Thus, also, all the Romanists confess, saying, viz., that there is no express scripture, first, for infant's baptisms; nor, second, for abolishing the seventh day, instituting the eighth day of worship, but that it is at the church's pleasure.

"4. You know that, generally, all this whole colony observe the first day, only here and there one out of conscience, another out of covetousness, make no conscience of it.

"5. You know the greatest part of the world make no conscience of a seventh day. The next part of the world, Turks, Jews, and Christians, keep three different days—Friday, Saturday, Sunday—for their Sabbath and day of worship; and every one maintains his own by the longest sword.

"6. I have offered, and do, by these presents, to discuss by disputation, writing or printing, among other points of differences, these three positions: first, that forced worship stinks in God's nostrils. 2nd. That it denies Christ Jesus yet to be come, and makes the church yet national, figurative, and ceremonial. 3rd. That in these flames about religion, as his majesty, his father, and grandfather have yielded, there is no other prudent, christian way of preserving peace in the world, but by permission of differing consciences. Accordingly, I do now offer to dispute these points and other points of difference, if you please, at Hartford, Boston, and Plymouth. For the manner of the dispute and the dis-

cussion, if you think fit, one whole day each month in summer, at each place, by course, I am ready, if the Lord permit, and, as I humbly hope, assist me.

"It is said, that you intend not to invade our spiritual or civil liberties, but only (under the advantage of first sealing your charter (to right the privateers that petition to you. It is said, also, that if you had but Mishquomacuck and Narragansett lands quietly yielded, you would stop at Cowesit, &c. Oh, sir, what do these thoughts preach, but that private cabins rule all, whatever become of the ship of common safety and religion, which is so much pretended in New England? Sir, I have heard further, and by some that say they know, that something deeper than all which hath been mentioned lies in the three colonies' breasts and consultations. I judge it not fit to commit such matter to the trust of paper, &c., but only beseech the Father of spirits to guide our poor bewildered spirits, for his name and mercy sake.

"Whereas our case seems to be the case of Paul appealing to Cæsar against the plots of his religious, zealous adversaries. I hear you pass not our petitions and appeals to his majesty, for partly you think the king will not own a profane people that do not keep the Sabbath; partly you think the king an incompetent judge, but you will force him to law also, to confirm your first-born Esau, though Jacob had him by the heels, and in God's holy time must carry the birthright and inheritance. I judge your surmise is a dangerous mistake; for patents, grants, and charters, and such like royal favors, are not laws of England and acts of parliament, nor matters of propriety and *meum* and *tuum* between the king and his subjects, which, as the times have been, have been sometimes triable in inferior courts; but such kind of grants have been like high offices in England, of high honor, and ten, yea, twenty thousand pounds gain per annum, yet revocable or curtable upon pleasure, according to the king's better information or upon his majesty's sight, or mis-

behavior, in gratefulness, or designs fraudulently plotted, private and distinct from him.

"Sir, I lament that such designs should be carried on at such a time, while we are stripped and whipped, and are still under (the whole country) the dreadful rods of God, in our wheat, hay, corn, cattle, shipping, trading, bodies, and lives; when on the other side of the water, all sorts of consciences (yours and ours) are frying in the bishops' pan and furnace; when the French and Romish Jesuits, the firebrands of the world for their god belly sake, are kindling at our back, in this country, especially with the Mohawks and Mohegans, against us, of which I know and have daily information.

"If any please to say, is there no medicine for this malady? Must the nakedness of New England, like some notorious strumpet, be prostituted to the blaspheming eyes of all nations? Must we be put to plead before his majesty, and consequently the lord bishops, our common enemies, &c.? I answer, the Father of mercies and God of all consolations hath graciously discovered to me, as I believe, a remedy, which, if taken, will quiet all minds, yours and ours; will keep yours and ours in quiet possession and enjoyment of their lands, which you all have so dearly bought and purchased in this barbarous country, and so long possessed amongst these wild savages; will preserve you both in the liberties and honors of your charters and governments, without the least impeachment of yielding one to another; with a strong curb also to those wild barbarians and all the barbarians of this country, without troubling of compromisers and arbitrators between you; without any delay, or long and chargeable and grievous address to our king's majesty, whose gentle and serene soul must needs be afflicted to be troubled again with us. If you please to ask me what my prescription is, I will not put you off to christian moderation, or christian humility, or christian prudence, or christian love, or christian self-denial, or christian contention or patience. For I design a civil, a

humane, and political medicine, which, if the God of heaven please to bless, you will find it effectual to all the ends I have proposed. Only I must crave your pardon, both parties of you, if I judge it not fit to discover it at present. I know you are both of you hot; I fear myself, also. If both desire, in a loving and calm spirit, to enjoy your rights, I promise you, with God's help, to help you to them, in a fair, and sweet, and easy way. My receipt will not please you all. If it should so please God to frown upon us that you should not like it, I can but humbly mourn, and say with the prophet, that which must perish, must perish. And as to myself, in endeavoring after your temporal and spiritual peace, I humbly desire to say, if I perish I perish. It is but a shadow vanished, a bubble broke, a dream finished. Eternity will pay for all.

"Sir, I am your old and true friend and servant,

"R. W."*

* Mass. Hist. Coll. vol. i.

No. II.—*Letter of Sir Henry Vane.*—(P. 115.)

The reader will have noticed the warm friendship, and the coincidence of opinion on religious freedom, existing between Roger Williams and Sir Henry Vane. It has been remarked by a distinguished historian, Sir James Mackintosh,* that the latter was "the first who laid down, with perfect precision, the inviolable rights of conscience, and the exemption of religion from all civil authority." Sir James had probably never seen Williams's "Bloudy Tenent," which was published twelve years before Sir Henry Vane's "Healing Question propounded and resolved," &c. In the last mentioned work, copies of which are now rare, Sir Henry, after having stated that the great design of the *honest party* was "to restore to the whole body their natural rights in civil things," makes the following striking observations on "true freedom in matters of conscience:"—

"The second branch which remains briefly to be handled, is that which also, upon the grounds of natural right, is to be laid claim unto; but distinguishes itself from the former, as it respects a more heavenly and excellent object, wherein the freedom is to be exercised and enjoyed; that is to say, matters of religion, or that concern the service and worship of God.

"Unto this freedom the nations of the world have right and title, by the purchase of Christ's blood, who, by virtue of his death and resurrection, is become the sole Lord and Ruler in and over the conscience; for to this end Christ

* View of the Reign of James II., p. 166.

died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living, and that every one might give an account of himself in all matters of God's worship, unto God and Christ alone, as their own Master, unto whom they stand or fall in judgment, and are not in these things to be oppressed, or brought before the judgment-seat of men. For why shouldest thou set at nought thy brother in matters of his faith and conscience, and herein intrude into the proper office of Christ, since we are all to stand at the judgment-seat of Christ, whether governors or governed, and by his decision only are capable of being declared, with certainty, to be in the right or in the wrong?

"By virtue, then, of this supreme law, sealed and confirmed in the blood of Christ unto all men (whose souls he challenges a propriety in, to bring under his inward rule in the service and worship of God), it is that all magistrates are to fear and forbear intermeddling with, giving rule or imposing in those matters. They are to content themselves with what is plain in their commission, as ordained of God to be his ministers unto men for good, whilst they approve themselves the doers of that which is good in the sight of men, and whereof earthly and worldly judicatures are capable to make a clear and perfect judgment; in which case the magistrate is to be for praise and protection to them. In like manner he is to be a minister of terror and revenge to those that do evil in matters of outward practice, converse, and dealings in the things of this life between man and man, for the cause whereof the judicatures of men are appointed and set up. But to exceed these limits, as it is not safe nor warrantable for the magistrate (in that He who is higher than the highest regards, and will show himself displeased at it), so neither is it good for the people, who hereby are nourished up in a biting, devouring, wrathful spirit one against another, and are found transgressors of that royal law which forbids us to do that unto another, which we would not have them do unto us, were we in their condition.

"This freedom, then, is of high concern to be had and enjoyed, as well for the magistrate's sake as for the people's common good, and it consists, as hath been, in the magistrate's forbearing to put forth the power of rule and coercion in things that God hath exempted out of his commission, so that all care requisite for the people's obtaining this may be exercised with great ease, if it be taken in its proper season; and that this restraint be laid upon the supreme power before it be erected, as a fundamental constitution, among others, upon which the free consent of the people is given, to have the persons brought into the exercise of supreme authority over them, and on their behalf; and if, besides, as a further confirmation hereunto, it be acknowledged the voluntary act of the ruling power, when once brought into a capacity of acting legislatively, that herein they are bound up, and judge it their duty so to be (both in reference to God, the institutor of magistracy, and in reference to the whole body by whom they are entrusted), this great blessing will hereby be so well provided for, that we shall have no cause to fear, as it may be ordered.

"By this means a great part of the outward exercise of antichristian tyranny and bondage will be plucked up by the very roots, which, till some such course be held in it, will be always apt to renew and sprout out afresh, under some new form or refined appearances, as by late years experience we have been taught. For, since the fall of the bishops and persecuting presbyteries, the same spirit is apt to arise in the next sort of clergy that can get the ear of the magistrate, and pretend to the keeping and ruling the conscience of the governors. Although this spirit and practice hath all along been decried by the faithful adherents to this cause, as a most sore oppression and insufferable yoke of bondage, most unrighteously kept up over the consciences of the people, and therefore judged by them most needful to be taken out of the way."—*A Healing Question propounded and resolved,*

upon occasion of the late public and seasonable Call to Humiliation, in order to love and union amongst the honest party, and with desire to apply balsam to the wound before it becomes incurable. By Henry Vane, knight. Pp. 5—8. 4to. London, 1656.

No. III.—(P. 124.)

The following is an abridgment of the genealogy of the Cromwell family, taken from the "London Review," for March, 1772.

This genealogy was extracted from Welsh chronicles, about the year 1602, to show the descent of Sir Henry Cromwell, who was then living. It commences in the person of Glothyan, fifth lord of Powes, who married Morpeth, daughter and heiress of Edwin ap Tydwall, lord of Cardigan, who was descended from Cavedig, from whom the county of Cardigan took the name of Cavedigion. His son, Gwaith Voyd, was lord of Cardigan, Powes, Gwayte, and Gwaynesaye. He died about 1066.

From Gwynstan ap Gwaith, second son of the above Gwaith Voyd, was lineally descended, through about thirteen generations, or in about four hundred and forty years, Morgan Williams, who, in the reign of Henry VIII., married the sister of Thomas Cromwell. This Morgan Williams had a son, Richard, who was knighted by Henry VIII., not by the name of Williams, but by the name of Cromwell, after his uncle, whose heir he became. This Sir Richard had a son, Henry, who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth, in 1563, and married Joan, daughter of Sir Ralph Warren, and had six sons and four daughters. The sons were, Oliver, Robert, Henry, Richard, Philip, and Ralph; Oliver, the Protector, was the only son of Robert, and born in the parish of St. John, in Huntingdon, April 25, 1599.

The tradition in the family of Williams, of there being a relationship by blood with the Protector, may be true; but it was, as will be perceived, quite remote.